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KENT ON SUNDAY

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GURKHA OP A 'DRAIN ON RESOURCES'

Sister denied UK entry to donate life-saving kidney

By STEVE KNIGHT

A GURKHA war veteran was denied a life-saving kidney transplant because the Government would not allow his sister to enter the country.

Kebahang Chemjong, 44, from Canterbury, fought in the British Army for 21 years, but says it was not enough to convince Home Office officials to treat his well-being as a priority.

The scandal is the latest row over the rights of Gurkhas, who have been campaigning for a fairer immigration policy to allow more of the retired soldiers and their families to settle in the UK.

Only after an 18-month struggle by the SSAFA Forces Help charity – during which time the brave Nepalese fighter required daily dialysis treatment – did the Government accept that Mr Chemjong's sister was who she claimed to be and allowed her into the country.

The married father-of-two, who served with the Folkestone-based 2nd Battalion, the Royal Gurkha Rifles, said: "I thought I had been left to die. I did not expect this sort of treatment having fought for Britain for so long.

"I thought being a Gurkha soldier made you special, but I was obviously wrong.

"I just don't understand why they refused the visa for my sister. She was only trying to save my life."

Mr Chemjong's kidney problems forced his medical discharge from the Army in January, 2007, and his doctor told him he was in desperate need of a transplant.

However, the Government's overseas representatives advised against allowing his sister into the UK because there were no official documents to prove her identity.

They also claimed that even if she was telling the truth, letting her into the country would be "a drain on NHS resources".

This was quickly refuted by Mr Chemjong's doctor, who pointed out that keeping her

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO

Quadriplegic sailor's world record bid

SEE INSIDE FOR FULL STORY

* Includes all surcharges and taxes. See website for details and full terms and conditions.

Help police 'sea' crime

LOOK OUT: Ramsgate Harbour is one place where the community can help police

POLICE are appealing to people who visit the coast – and particularly boat-owners – to be their 'eyes and ears' when it comes to investigating illegal activity at sea, ***writes Nick Ames.***

They are appealing for help in the fight against terrorism, people-smuggling and drug-running as well as less serious crimes.

The move is part of a new initiative called Project Kraken, which aims to tackle crime and security threats affecting the marine community.

These range from vandalism and theft, to national security issues such as drug importation, immigration crime and terrorism.

This project demonstrates how the public can play a key role in tackling crime and national security issues in coastal locations.

The counter-terrorism hotline is 0800 789321.

A police spokesman said: "The covert operations and sensitive inquiries carried out by specialist police teams, such as Special Branch Frontier Operations, might sometimes seem a world away from day-to-day matters in the community.

"But information from the people within the community can prove vital, particularly in relation to drugs supply, immigration crime and terrorism."

Det Sgt Simon Hiscock, from Kent Police Frontier Operations, said: "It is the marine community that are our eyes and ears.

"What you tell us contributes to an intelligence picture and operational profile that helps us support tactics to address both local and national needs.

"Sometimes the public are unaware of the key role they can play in community intelligence gathering and the difference they can make to other people's quality of life."

Officers say they will seek to work together to protect Kent's coastline by mounting joint policing operations and exchanging information.

An example of this partnership is a Kent Police operation that targets the criminal use of small fast craft in the English Channel.

This operation involves colleagues from UK police, French, Dutch and Belgian police, the Marine Coastguard and the UK Border Agency and is provided around the year.

• ***See p8 for more on Kent Police's battle against people trafficking.***

Gurkha thought he was being left to die

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

patient on dialysis would be six times more expensive than a kidney transplant.

Fighting Mr Chemjong's corner was a caseworker from SSAFA Forces Help, which supports current and former servicemen.

The case-worker, who wished to remain anonymous, said: "I understand Government agencies are represented by people overseas and they have to accept what is relayed back to them, but Kebahang fought in the Army for 21 years and his case should have been settled a lot sooner.

"What you get annoyed about is that Gurkhas want no more than to continue to serve this country so they can earn a living for themselves and their families.

"They don't want to be a drain on society and their pride is hurt to a certain extent when they are treated as such.

"Not only did Kebahang feel hard done by, but his wife was very worried too because she could see his physical condition deteriorating all the time.

"I was at great pains to comfort them both and I told them this was a battle we were not going to lose."

Mr Chemjong's sister was finally granted her visa in February, following a long stream of back-and-forth emails between the caseworker and Canterbury MP Julian Brazier, who forwarded the correspondence on to Home Office minister Meg Hillier.

If all goes well, the three-hour transplant operation will be undertaken at Guy's Hospital, London, later this year.

The Government has come under fire in recent weeks over its controversial immigration policy for retired Gurkha soldiers.

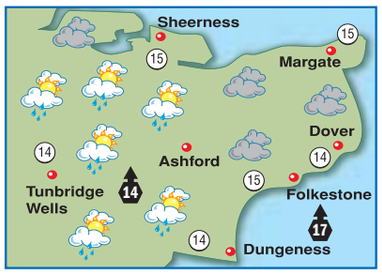
Strong public support for the Nepalese fighters' plight – publicised by Joanna Lumley and the Kent-based Gurkha Justice Campaign – led to Labour's first defeat in an opposition day debate since 1997.

A UK Border Agency spokesman disputed Mr Chemjong's claims: "It is not true to claim it took 18 months to issue this person a visa."

When asked how long it did take, the spokesman said the agency was not allowed to discuss individual cases.

UNFAIR: Kebahang Chemjong had served in the British Army for 21 years, but was made to wait 18 months before his life-saving kidney donor could enter the county

Kent today



TODAY: It will start dry but rather cloudy. It will stay fairly cloudy in the afternoon but it should stay dry. Chance of some rain in the evening. Moderate southerly winds. Max temp 13-16C (55-61F).
TONIGHT: Often cloudy with spells of rain. Moderate south-westerly winds. Min temp 8-11C (46-52F).

Around Britain

		°C	°F			°C	°F
Aberdeen	rain	12	54	London	showers	14	57
Belfast	showers	15	59	Liverpool	cloudy	16	61
Birmingham	showers	12	54	Manchester	showers	13	55
B'mouth	showers	13	55	Newcastle	showers	14	57
Bristol	showers	12	54	Norwich	showers	16	61
Cardiff	showers	13	55	Oxford	showers	15	59
Cork	showers	12	54	Southsea	showers	15	59
Edinburgh	rain	13	55	S'hampton	showers	14	57
Glasgow	rain	13	55	Southport	sun	15	59
Isle of Man	showers	13	55	Swansea	showers	13	55
Leeds	showers	11	52	Torquay	showers	12	54

Sun & moon

Sunrise	5.00am	Sunset	8.45pm	Lighting up times:
Moonrise	1.59am	Moonset	12.21pm	8.45pm to 4.58am

High Tides

	today				tomorrow			
		ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)
Dover	05.12	5.2	17.37	5.3	06.23	5.1	18.45	5.3
Margate	06.15	3.8	18.21	3.8	07.19	3.8	19.32	3.8
St Mary's	11.00	4.1	23.34	4.3	–	–	12.14	4.1

Week ahead

monday A few showers max 17C min 9C

tuesday Mainly fine max 19C min 9C

wednesday Showers max 22C min 11C

thursday Mainly fair max 22C min 11C

friday Thunder risk max 20C min 10C

saturday Thundery max 18C min 10C

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No payback for Bob

Angry MP refuses to cough up expenses

By STEVE KNIGHT
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A MEDWAY MP caught up in the scandal over second-home expense claims says he has no plans to pay any of the money back.

Responding to allegations in The Telegraph that he spent thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money on luxury items and redecorating at his flat in Rochester, Bob Marshall-Andrews said he felt "angry, despondent and sad" at the tone of the article.

And the Labour MP, who is due to stand down at the next general election, told Kent on Sunday he would not be following the lead of other members who have agreed to pay back some of their expenses.

He said: "Of course I've considered it in light of this story, but I don't think I should have to. My constituents know the property in Rochester is essentially my office.

Tidy ship

"I also have a room there that I reside in, and I do it that way with the specific intent to save the taxpayer money because that way I don't have two separate premises.

"Hand on heart, I think we run a tidy ship and when I walk away from it I will not carry any benefit with me. I will leave everything behind for whoever replaces me."

MPs have this week been queueing up repay their expenses claims, after revelations showed the taxpayer had paid for work on moats, tennis courts and swimming pools.

Andrew MacKay quit as an aide to David Cameron, Elliot Morley has been suspended by Labour for claims on a mortgage that had already been paid off, and on Friday Shahid Malik stepped down as justice minister.

DESPONDENT: Bob Marshall-Andrews has fired back at the Daily Telegraph's claims

When asked if he was embarrassed by the revelations, Mr Marshall-Andrews replied: "I think embarrassed is the wrong word. It makes me very despondent and sad because I've always tried to do a good job.

"But I'm mainly angry for my staff, because this sort of thing upsets them terribly."

The Telegraph has run a series of articles on MPs' expenses since official documents were leaked to the paper earlier this month.

Mr Marshall-Andrews was on the firing line on Tuesday when it was revealed he had claimed £750 on a "multi-room audio system" at his office, as well as £1,800 replacing his living room carpet with oak wood panels and £200 on a pair of Kenyan carpets.

He also spent thousands on renovations to the property as well as £1,300 on an intercom system and other furniture for his front door.

The total amount claimed for the property since 2001 is £117,916, with the majority spent on monthly mortgage interest charges and bills for council tax and groceries.

Mr Marshall-Andrews said he was angry The Telegraph had not made it clear his second home doubled as his constituency office, nor that most claims were split between his own allowance and that for office expenses as a result. His main home is in Richmond, west London.

He added that wear and tear of the property was inevitable, that 99 per cent of the original furniture had been paid for from his own pocket, and the audio system was the only possession purchased that "provided a measure of personal benefit".

Mr Marshall-Andrews was first elected as an MP in 1997 and scraped back in with a majority of just 213 in May, 2005.

He told KoS he did not know if such revelations about his expenses would have caused him to lose his seat if they had come to light before the last elections.

Overhaul

Mr Marshall-Andrews added: "If the information had been put in the public domain correctly and people realised my second home and my office were one and the same, it might have even helped me.

"I would hope that people would say 'that is how it ought to be done'."

Both Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Tory leader David Cameron agreed this week that the MPs' expenses system needs a complete overhaul, with Mr Brown saying claims should be independently scrutinised in future.

Mr Marshall-Andrews, who was one of 27 rebel MPs to vote against Labour in the historic Gurkhas' rights debate this month, said he agreed the PM on this occasion.

He said: "I've always said there needs to be more transparency. I was opposed when the Speaker tried to go to court to stop the Freedom of Information Act request about MPs' expenses. It was an awful thing to do.

"We have to reassure people."

Woman charged over school theft

A WOMAN has been charged with theft after a "considerable" amount of money went missing from the Medway school where she worked.

Sharon Haigh, of Mallingdene Close in Cliffe, near Rochester, faces seven counts of theft, one of fraud and two relating to forgery, police said on Friday.

The 34-year-old is alleged to have committed the crime during her time working at Cliffe Woods pre-school.

Dickens artefact is the snuff of legend

A SNUFF box given to Charles Dickens by his Chatham schoolmaster has sold at auction for £8,500.

The rare item, made in 1834, was presented to the famous author by his tutor William Giles. The 3.5oz silver box was engraved to 'Charles Dickens Esquire' from his 'sincerely attached friend and former tutor W Giles'.

It was sold at the Philip Serrell Auctioneers in Malvern, Worcestershire on Thursday. The box was estimated at £8,000-12,000.

To watch this clip search 'cherry' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

Julie Maddocks attends the launch of Produced in Kent's cherry trail at Doddington Place Gardens

Anchors away as Hilary renews world record bid

AN INSPIRATIONAL quadriplegic yachtswoman is set to relaunch her world record attempt to sail solo around the UK.

Hilary Lister, who lives in Canterbury, was forced to abandon last year's sail due to bad weather but the 37-year-old and her support team are now ready to begin the Round Britain Dream on Wednesday.

As preparations for the voyage intensified, a spokesman for the team said: "Hilary has had to overcome the financial challenges of this year to be able to finance the Round Britain Dream.

"The project is still searching for a major sponsor, remembering that the aim of the Round Britain Dream is not only to inspire and raise awareness of disabled sailing but to raise funds for her charity Hilary's Dream Trust.

"The trust exists to provide assistance to disabled and disadvantaged adults with sailing dreams."

But money worries have been set aside as Mrs Lister has been focusing on training in the Channel off the coast of Dover in preparation for the main voyage.

After a small set back last Wednesday, which saw the mast of her specially adapted boat Me Too break, the team has now moved down to Plymouth and only had to delay the voyage two days to fix the problem.

The boat, which is a 6m carbon fibre keelboat designed by Rogers Yacht Design, is controlled using a 'sip and puff' system.

Three straws, which are connected to sensitive pressure switches, are used and a gentle 'sip' on one takes the boat starboard (right) and a puff on the other takes it to port (left).

THAR SHE BLOWS: Hilary Lister is ready to set sail in bid to circumnavigate the UK

Mrs Lister has already sailed further than any other female disabled sailor during her first attempt at the round Britain challenge, which began from Dover last June.

Sadly, when she reached Newlyn some 50 nautical miles around the south coast, bad weather stopped the journey.

• ***Keep up to date with her second attempt at www.hilarylister.com.***

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'I know where war hero's ID tag is'

THE identity tag of a downed World War Two American airman is still in Thanet and could be returned to his relatives in time for a ceremony to honour his memory next year.

According to beachcomber Tony Ovenden, the dog tag of George M Hasner were found on the beach near where his plane crashed.

He said: "I know who has the tag, a fellow I know who is also a beachcomber. He showed it to me and I held it in my hand.

"In the 1970s a storm smashed the groynes at Palm Bay and sand started to erode. We found a crater where there'd been a fire and we started to find wreckage.

"In 1995, part of the crater started to show again and I found a lump of metal to show an expert. At that point I was put in touch with the person who has the tag. I borrowed it, noting the name and number, before giving it back. I told the chap he should really give it back, but he shrugged and that was where it was left."

HEROES: Crew of crashed Liberator B24

Lt George Hasner was aboard a Liberator B24 that crashed into cliffs at Princes Walk, Palm Bay, on April 27, 1944. The details on the tag are: 0752488 T43 MR GP HASNER, putting his home as 779 Lafond Avenue, St Paul, Minnesota.

Those involved in commemorating the events of that night in 1944, during which two Liberators came down in Thanet, are appealing for the tag to be returned.

Simon Moores has taken a keen interest in the story and with Mayor of Margate Cllr Brian Sullivan arranged a ceremony to honour those who lost their lives that night.

He said: "It would be right and proper to get the tag back so we can do the right thing."

A service was held in honour of the airmen at the Westgate-on-Sea war memorial last week, near the site of the second crash.

Hockey star Mel's fellowship delight

HOCKEY international Mel Clewlow has been made an honorary fellow by Canterbury Christ Church University.

Dover-born Ms Clewlow joined Canterbury Hockey Club in 1994 and represented England at under-16, under-18 and under-21 levels before making her senior debut in 1996.

Since then she has been an ever-present member of the England and GB teams, playing in three Commonwealth Games, three World Cups, four European Cups and two Olympic Games, winning two silver medals and four bronze.

She said: "To receive an honorary fellowship from Christ Church in recognition of my sporting success is a privilege."

Bucks Fizz still top of the Eurovision charts

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
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THE Bucks Fizz hit Making Your Mind Up has been named the most popular Eurovision song in the contest's history.

The 1981 winner, sung by Kent star Cheryl Baker, topped the charts in eight countries. Now it has been put top of the all-time Eurovision chart by PRS for Music, which collects artists' royalties.

The placing is based on the number of plays each song has had from UK broadcasters – and Bucks Fizz's hit represented 37 per cent of all the songs analysed.

It beat Puppet on a String by Sandie Shaw into second place, and Cliff Richard's Congratulations into third.

Ms Baker told Kent on Sunday: "I'm absolutely thrilled. When I saw Sandie Shaw win Eurovision, I said to myself, 'That's my ambition, not to just be a singer, but to be at the Eurovision Song Contest'.

"And 14 years later I did it. It was all down to timing – and pulling our skirts off.

"We had just come out of the 1970s – which ended with dismal songs like Anarchy in the UK.

"Making Your Mind Up isn't the best-written song and the lyrics don't make sense, but it was the early '80s and it seemed time for frivolity. People couldn't care less, they wore bright clothes, spent too much money and had a great time. We were four blondes in bright clothes and brought a feel-good factor. And then we ripped our skirts off during the song – it doesn't get more frivolous than that."

HEYDAY: Cheryl Baker, left, in Bucks Fizz

CHERYL BAKER: Proud

Bucks Fizz are hitting the road again, and Ms Baker will be pushing to hold a show or two in Kent.

She said: "I would love to do shows in Kent – I must have a word with the agent. We do still rip our skirts off, and get a massive cheer. You can't top it."

Since Bucks Fizz, mother-of-two Ms Baker, 55, has been an author, TV and radio presenter, singer, actress, and campaigned for cleaner hospitals after her mother-in-law died of a superbug infection.

And ahead of last night's Eurovision in Moscow she said she hoped Britain would get a fairer deal than last year.

BBC host Terry Wogan slammed the 'political' voting of some nations, saying: "This is no longer a music contest."

But Ms Baker, who lives near Sevenoaks, said campaigning by Andrew Lloyd Webber could turn the tide. She said: "There are a lot of east European countries who are never going to vote for us. They will be voting for their neighbours. That's a shame, but I understand. Change will come, but it'll be a slow process. We have thrown everything at the wall this year in the hope of doing better, so something has to stick."

Last year, X Factor contestant Andy Abraham, 43, came last. Yesterday Jade Ewen was representing Britain with Andrew Lloyd Webber and Diane Warren's song It's My Time.

• ***Cheryl Baker is also in Menopause the Musical, at Tunbridge Wells, on June 1-2. Call the box office on 01892 530613.***

To see this clip search 'living' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

More children than ever wanted to be at the 2009 Living Land Show at the county showground in Detling. Search 'living'

Pushing the boat out for Victoria

A TEENAGER from Tunbridge Wells received the Youth 13-18 Supporter Award 2009 at the RNLI's annual awards at the Barbican in London, this week.

Victoria Redman, 14, who attends Sevenoaks School, has supported the RNLI since the age of nine, when she visited lifeboat stations during family trips to Cornwall.

Over the last five years Victoria has raised £2,000 for the Port Isaac lifeboat station by holding an annual Christmas fair, selling cakes, jewellery and greetings cards, and holding a tombola.

Dancing with the cricketing stars

LATIN American dancers Kerri-Anne Donaldson and Alejandro Hernandez will be at High Rocks in Tunbridge Wells on June 18 in aid of Kent cricketer Martin Saggers' benefit year.

They will star at the Strictly Glitzy Ball, which is also supporting Wellbeing of Women and other charities. Bob Bevan MBE will host the evening.

Tables of 10 are available for £650. Individual tickets cost £65. Email laura@saggersbenefit2009.co.uk or ring 07802 643696 for details.

Sir Alan points dreaded finger at Swale Apprentice star after Margate rebrand

Pink pound proves too costly for Mona

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

APPRENTICE star Mona Lewis says she should have trusted her knowledge of Kent to avoid being booted off the popular BBC show.

The 28-year-old from Sittingbourne was the latest candidate to be told "you're fired" by Sir Alan Sugar on Wednesday night, after her team failed in their attempts to rebrand Margate.

Mona told KoS she felt her team made the wrong decision in attempting to promote the gritty seaside town as a haven for gay people and wishes she had fought harder against the idea.

She said: "Being a resident of Kent, and knowing more about it than the others, I thought it would be better to target the family market because Margate has a lot of family heritage, it's receiving a lot of investment and there are major things going on.

"I wish I had fought harder against the gay idea because I thought it limited the market. The problem with me is I sometimes have difficulty expressing myself and I thought that if I had fought any harder it might have made me look like I was against gay people."

Despite Mona's opposition to her team's idea, Sir Alan revealed on the show how the branding experts and residents who acted as judges for the task were supportive of it.

What they were less impressed with was the shoddily-produced leaflet and cluttered series of posters that accompanied the campaign.

Mona was fired from the show after being brought back into the boardroom with project manager Debra Barr and former commercial manager James McQuillan.

YOUR FIRED: Sir Alan Sugar felt that Sittingbourne's Mona Lewis failed to shine in the task to rebrand Margate

She said: "I was fired because Sir Alan felt he could not see where I would fit into his operation. If his reasons were based solely on this particular task then I don't believe it was right for me to go because I felt I gave 100 per cent.

Pleased

"However, I think the time was right for me to leave because I really missed my little boy and eight weeks was a long time to be away from him for, so I was happy in that respect."

Mona, who was born in Karachi, Pakistan, and is a former financial manager, now works for Business Link to help Kent firms capitalise on the 2012 Olympics.

She told KoS that "only time will tell" if her time on The Apprentice will help or hinder her future job prospects, but that she was pleased with the way she came across on the show.

Mona said: "It was definitely an experience and it was quite an honour to be selected, especially as I have only lived in the country for four years. I was able to show off my selling and negotiating skills and I think I acted with dignity and professionalism at all times.

"In that sense I don't think I've done myself any harm at all although there are certain people left who I think may have some difficulties in the future. Ben (Clarke) for instance is quite arrogant and I don't think he'll win. He might have to lay low for a bit after he is fired."

Mona's firing leaves national accounts manager Lorraine Tighe as Kent's only representative left in the competition.

• ***The Apprentice can be seen every Wednesday, at 9pm on BBC One.***

Empire collapses at seaside

A DAY at the seaside for Sir Alan Sugar and his team of apprentices thrust Margate back into the national spotlight.

Once a popular location for the British holidaymaker, the town has fallen on hard times in recent years and therefore appealed to the BBC as a place in need of a new image.

The latest episode saw the two teams attempt to rebrand the seaside town by producing a series of posters and a leaflet.

Sir Alan pointed to The O2 arena in London – formerly the Millennium Dome – as a perfect example of somewhere that had been successfully re-branded.

Of all the potential candidates, brash trainee stockbroker Ben Clarke was the most critical about what Margate had to offer. When his Ignite team-mate Lorraine Tighe commented on how beautiful some of the older buildings in the town were, Ben replied: "Well, the ones that aren't boarded up."

Ignite's project manager was restaurateur Yasmina Siadatan, who along with Kate Walsh helped create the posters and leaflet for their 'See Margate through children's eyes' idea.

Yasmina also had a hard time controlling Kent-based Lorraine, who constantly criticised their team's poster design.

Empire was made up of Sittingbourne resident Mona Lewis and her team-mates Debra Barr, James McQuillan and Howard Ebison, who between them agreed to market Margate as the ideal destination for gay people.

While two separate panels of rebranding experts and town residents liked the idea, they were not impressed with the cluttered posters or unfinished leaflet that accompanied it.

Sir Alan told the losing team: "You made a brief statement and then whispered the message. I don't think anyone objected to the gay theme – they just thought it was pathetic.

"I'm looking at your posters and leaflet as an ordinary English punter, not a businessman, and they tell me nothing."

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Wembley final is proof of our potential, says Scally

Gills chief expects 38,000 tickets to be snapped up

GILLINGHAM chairman Paul Scally says the huge demand for Wembley tickets has again demonstrated the potential of Kent's only Football League club, ***writes Steve Knight***

The Gills will make their first appearance at the newly-rebuilt national stadium in the League Two play-off final next Saturday, with promotion to the division above at stake.

But despite an average home attendance of just 5,307 this season, the club has been allocated a whopping 38,000 tickets for the make-or-break showdown with Shrewsbury Town.

In comparison, Gillingham's opponents have been handed just 21,000, despite a higher average attendance of 5,664.

Mr Scally told Kent on Sunday he expected the club's entire allocation to be sold.

He said: "I've always known there's great potential at this club. We've just got to get the team back into as high a division as we can and build a stronger base.

"I've believed that Gillingham can be a Premiership side since the first day I came here because there's such a wide fan base to draw from.

"Kent is a far bigger conurbation than Wigan, Hull and Stoke so there's no reason why we can't do what they have done, although we do need a new stadium first.

"I think Kent needs a Premiership side. It's a big county, there are a lot of football people here and I think as time goes by people will become less interested in travelling to London to watch a team play."

Mr Scally purchased the debt-ridden Gills in 1995 for just £1 and took the club out of administration shortly before it was due to be liquidised.

The team enjoyed tremendous success for the first seven years of his tenure – including two promotions and two appearances at the old Wembley Stadium – but they have been on a downward slide ever since.

Today Mr Scally lives in Dubai and spends much of his time meeting potential new investors in the hope they will help finance his club back up the football ladder.

He said: "I'm talking to a lot of interesting people who are watching with interest at what we are trying to achieve at Gillingham, but I've also met a lot of people who I wouldn't want to be involved with.

"Just because they're wealthy, it doesn't mean they're right for this football club."

Gillingham's appearance at Wembley on Saturday comes just a week before the 10th anniversary of the first time the club had ever appeared at the national stadium.

On that occasion they lost on penalties to Manchester City in the Division Two (now League One) play-off final after throwing away a 2-0 lead in the final minutes of normal time.

Their fortunes a year later were far improved, defeating Wigan Athletic 3-2 in extra time to reach the second tier of English football for the first time in the club's history.

Mr Scally said of the Shrewsbury showdown: "I'm nervous at every game but even more so at Wembley. I'll probably be feeling quite ill and exhausted on the day, but I'll be there with my family so I'm sure they'll help me through it.

"Hopefully the team can produce the goods on the pitch and help us on the road back to where we want to be."

Picture: ADY KERRY

FAN BASE: Paul Scally (inset) is expecting Gillingham to sell their 38,000 tickets for the play-off final at Wembley

To watch this clip search 'Wembley' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

Gills manager Mark Stimson talks about his hopes for the play-off final at Wembley next Saturday

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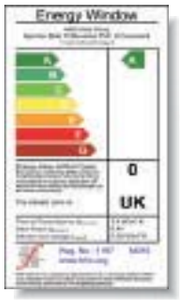

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Force praised for its fight against 'human slavery'

A REPORT by an influential group of MPs has named Kent Police as among the best forces in the country for tackling human trafficking.

The Home Affairs Select Committee carried out a year-long investigation into the authorities' handling of the crime and took evidence from the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC).

When asked to highlight best practice, the organisation, which was set up in 2007 to establish closer links between the immigration service and law enforcement agencies, rated the Metropolitan Police's specialist unit at the top of the league table.

The UKHTC also named teams from West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and Humberside Police and Kent Police.

In the report, the cross-party MPs warned that the country was facing a "resurgence of slavery" if human trafficking was not tackled.

Justice

Victims of human trafficking include men, women and children, who are brought to the UK from a wide range of countries including the Baltic States, Eastern Europe and the Far East, to be exploited through prostitution, the drugs trade and domestic labour.

Kent's Assistant Chief Constable Allyn Thomas said: "Kent Police will not tolerate this unacceptable and inhumane treatment of vulnerable people and will bring those responsible to justice."

The committee's report to Parliament said there are at least 5,000 human trafficking victims in the UK and said more investment was needed to tackle the criminal networks responsible.

Labour MP Keith Vaz, the committee's chair, said: "This is not an immigration crime and cannot be dealt with as such. What we are seeing is in effect a resurgence of a type of slave trade."

Over 45s contracting sex diseases faster than any age group

SEXUALLY transmitted infections among people over 45 are rising at a rapid rate in the county.

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
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New figures obtained by Kent on Sunday show cases of chlamydia in middle-aged people across Kent have soared by more than 80 per cent since 2005.

According to the Health Protection Agency the number of people over 45 catching STIs is rising at a faster rate than in younger age groups, and a recent study has shown that middle-aged people are taking risks with their sexual health.

Dr Chula Wijesurendra, a consultant at Medway Maritime Hospital's Genito Urinary Medicine (GUM) department, said there was a need for safe-sex messages, usually targeted at teenagers, to be aimed at the older generation.

He said: "The number of these infections is increasing year in and year out. But I cannot get the message across on my own that people must take precautions. With the numbers that are coming through at the moment I don't have time to properly educate everybody about these conditions.

"The safe-sex message is very important. I treat a lot of patients and infections like chlamydia are hidden and people do not know they have it."

Chlamydia is the most commonly diagnosed STI. It is treatable, but because there are often no symptoms in both men and women it can go undiagnosed. It can lead to infertility and other complications.

At Medway's GUM clinic, cases of non-specific urethritis among over 45s increased by 46 per cent between 2006-08.

Recklessness

The condition is a result of having unprotected sex with a partner with an STI and is called 'non specific' because further testing can identify a variety of infections that have been responsible for the symptom, which is inflammation of the urethra.

The GUM clinic at Kent and Sussex Hospital in Tunbridge Wells has seen the number of middle-aged people diagnosed with a STI increase from 116 in 2005, to more than double, 268, last year.

In Medway the figures show a similar trend with cases rising nearly 40 per cent between 2006-08.

A study carried out earlier this year by the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain found that over 45s are taking risks with their sexual health.

Nearly one in five 45 to 54-year-olds surveyed said they had had unprotected sex with someone other than a long-term partner in the past five years.

But worryingly, 32 per cent described their risk of catching an STI when having unprotected sex with a new partner 'unlikely' or 'very unlikely'. A further 20 per cent believed their chances of getting an infection were 'next to nothing'. In comparison, only 13 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds answered the question in the same way.

Dr Wijesurendra said: "This is a very dangerous attitude to have. People tend to associate this kind of recklessness with younger generations, but older people are not immune to STIs."

He added: "Because they don't need to worry about the risk of pregnancy, people in this age bracket often think contraception isn't necessary, but they still need to protect themselves against things like genital warts, chlamydia and HIV/Aids."

The positive side to the figures from the Medway and Tunbridge Wells clinics show that an increasing number of people over 45 are getting tested for STIs.

Last year, just over 800 middle-aged people went to the west Kent clinic and 33 per cent were diagnosed with an STI. In Medway, 35 per cent of the 517 people who went to the GUM department had an infection. Advice was given to 122 people and 127 were treated for another conditions such as thrush.

So, although STIs are on the rise, Dr Wijesurendra said it was good that testing had become quicker and more accessible.

Heidi Wright, head of practice at the Pharmaceutical Society, added: "Over the last decade STIs have risen significantly in the 45 to 60 age group.

"You can't always tell who has an STI and infections don't discriminate on the basis of age. If you have unprotected sex with a new partner you are at risk of STIs which often show few symptoms, but can have serious consequences to health."

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Straw men standing tall after winning prestigious art award

A NOMADIC scarecrow tribe that has set up home in Chatham during the last two summers has won a top arts award.

The Hei People, created by Finnish artist Reijo Kela, picked up first prize at the biennial Rouse Kent Public Art Award – held to recognise the best piece of open-air art in the county during the past two years.

The 100-strong wooden tribe first came to Medway in July 2007, when they set up camp at Fort Amherst. The eerie figures were massacred during their first brief stay, with drunken yobs breaking into the Napoleonic fort and tearing the scarecrow community to pieces. One unfortunate tribesman was even dragged to Gun Wharf and unceremoniously dumped in the River Medway.

The shaken Hei People then moved on to the Isle of Sheppey – where they were once again attacked – and later took root in Shorne.

The runner-up for the art award was 'Plotlands' by Clio Barnard, a film and book marking the demise of the plotland community on the Seasalter Marshes.

Breaking Boundaries, part of Ashford's £15 million shared space highway scheme and And Here, a film of North Kent's industrial and urban environment, were both highly commended.

TRAVELLERS: Medway's Hei People

Schoolgirl injured by collapsed roof had talked about creaking noises in hall before, says mum

LUCKY: Rianna Walton (left)

THE mother of a girl injured when a heating duct fell from a college roof during an exam said pupils had talked about strange creaking noises coming from the sports hall years before the collapse, ***writes Emily Hall***.

Mandy Walton – whose 14-year-old daughter Rianna needed hospital treatment after metal pipes and rubble fell onto Minster College pupils on Tuesday – said four of her children had attended the school and all had complained about the sports hall where the accident happened.

Mrs Walton, 46, from Minster, said: "Rianna has talked about the noises coming from the hall for a couple of years.

"She said kids could hear creaking noises coming from the roof. I've had four children go to that school and my daughter Kirsty, who's now 19, said the same thing when she was at the school. Everyone knows the buildings are old and that they are due to be rebuilt, but it should really have been done 10 years ago.

Rianna was one of more than 200 pupils taking exams at the on the Isle of Sheppey school when a heating duct came tumbling from the ceiling, bringing down rubble and debris shortly after 9.15am.

Although it landed in between two rows of desks 14 children were hurt.

First aiders tended to the injured, although many more children were walking wounded and some left the site in Minster Road in shock.

Spitting blood

Rianna, taking the same business SATs test as 60 other year nines, said she couldn't see teachers in the building at the time, although there were several invigilators.

The teenager was one of the first to run out of the building to get help, but she said that at first the people she approached did not believe her.

"We heard this rumbling noise and then the roof just collapsed," she said. "I didn't look at anyone, I just ran out of the sports hall. I then saw everyone crying. There was one girl spitting blood and her eyebrow was cut."

Another pupil, Chaise Trayling, 16, was in lessons when she heard a commotion.

"There was a boy with his lip ripped open and another girl with a piece of metal stuck in her eye. Lots of pupils were crying out of shock."

Eleven pupils were taken to Medway Maritime Hospital.

Minster College has about 1,600 students aged between 14-19. It reopened on Wednesday.

Court rules in favour of KCC migrant age concern case

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

COUNTY Hall bosses have welcomed a 'precedent-setting' High Court ruling over judging the age of young asylum seekers.

The long-running dispute began when social workers from Kent County Council and the London Borough of Croydon said they believed two Afghan refugees were over 18.

The case was important because the councils have a greater duty of care towards asylum seekers under the age of 18.

Kent cares for more young asylum seekers than any other county. Between April-December, 2008, some 474 new young asylum seekers arrived though Kent's ports.

In the court case, the councils' judgements were challenged by the young people through their solicitors and paediatricians.

Doctors involved in the case judged that the age of the young people was more likely to be 15.

The judge, Mr Justice Collins, ruled both authorities were entitled to rely on the expertise of their social workers.

Bill Anderson, KCC's director of children's social services, said: "The whole issue of age assessment has been going on for a considerable number of years.

"One of the main issues around the court case is that some doctors who are employed by immigration lawyers are giving definitive statements about age.

"This ruling has identified that actually the level of weight that should be given to this is much less than the doctors claim."

He said the test case had now set a precedent: "I think we can now focus our services on those vulnerable young people that really need the services rather than on long, lengthy disputes over age."

Mr Anderson said young people smuggled into the county through ports such as Dover had been told that there were advantages to being identified as under 18.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people are taken into the county's care system, whereas those over 18 are treated as adults.

"Most of the young people are very vulnerable and so we have to make sure we care for them as a group of children," he said.

"It is not in their interest to have older people of different experiences at 21 or 22 mixed up with them. It is about safeguarding as much as gate keeping."

Determine

In his ruling, Mr Collins said Kent and Croydon had developed "expertise" in dealing with asylum seeking children.

Peter Gilroy, KCC chief executive, said: "We very much welcome this judgement. It has been a long and hard-fought campaign and this decision vindicates the approach of KCC in our care of unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

"We always seek to protect the interests of children and every effort is made to determine the age of these young people in a fair and consistent manner as has been upheld today."

Mr Anderson said the age of young asylum seekers was assessed over several weeks, taking into account their physical appearance, emotional status and their psychological function.

"Our social workers have enormous skill," he said.

"That is why it is enormously rewarding that it has been recognised and it is why we were prepared to go to court. The judge said very clearly that the value of medical reports must always be in the place of broad assessment. There is concern that medical assessment has been done in a way that had very little knowledge of the children and was quite badly informed."

He said it was better for young people judged not to be adults to avoid lengthy court proceedings so that they could get into the adult asylum process more quickly.

"This is a tribute to the way services at KCC are set up and run and to the staff to reaffirm they are very good at assessing young people," he added.

News and sport updated daily online
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Inquiry into phone-shy council staff

A PROBE has been launched into the use of a council's voicemail system – after staff were discovered diverting important phone calls while sitting at their desks.

Customers are said to be angry their queries are not getting answered at Swale Borough Council, where some officers appear to be phone shy.

The problem came to a head after customer service advisors at the Sittingbourne-based authority said complaints were going unresolved as officers too often pulled the plug on incoming calls.

Some departments were even found to be constantly on voicemail.

An internal report discussed at a council executive meeting this week, said the council's management team should "introduce either a policy or some golden rules on the use of voicemail to stop officers from diverting their phones while at their desks".

Council scrutiny officers took statements from several disgruntled customers at the end of last year and vowed to do something to improve council communication.

Council leader Andrew Bowles said the review was to find the extent of the problem.

He said: "I think someone obviously picked up on it being a problem and obviously we need to investigate to discover whether that's true."

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Marines tribute

A SPECIAL church service is being held to pay tribute to the Royal Marines from a north Kent town that took part in D-Day landings.

To mark the 65th anniversary of the battle, Adam Holloway, the Tory MP for Gravesham, will be among those paying their respects at Christ Church in Gravesend at 11.30am today.

A service is held in May each year to mark the month the town's 48 Commando marched off to war. The Royal Marines were formed under the order of General Montgomery and their objective on D-Day was to take a strong point at Langrune-sur-Mer.

Of the 440 servicemen who left Gravesend only 223 survived the Normandy invasion.

Waste firm fined

A COMPANY that burns clinical waste has been fined £20,000 and ordered to pay £13,000 for breaching its permit.

The Environment Agency said that White Rose Environmental Limited, which operates a waste incinerator at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, was failing to comply with emissions limits set under its permit.

The company received the heavy fines after pleading guilty to the offence at Maidstone Crown Court on Monday.

Drugs raid arrests

MORE than 100 officers have taken part in an operation that saw homes raided as part of an international operation targeting drugs cash.

Three men and three women were arrested at four addresses in Bromley in the early hours of Thursday following a large-scale investigation into a money laundering network.

It came after the Met's Trident financial investigation unit discovered a criminal network in south London was sending regular sums of cash to the Caribbean island using money bureaux.

Detectives believe the cash came from drug dealing on the streets of the capital.

Recruits not fit for purpose

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
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HOME Office figures for fitness-test failures suggest Kent Police has the unhealthiest pool of potential recruits to draw from in the country.

Latest returns show that almost 17 per cent of wannabe officers and probationers were sent packing after receiving sub-standard results for tests of stamina and upper-body strength.

Avon and Somerset Constabulary posted similar results, followed by a failure rate of 10 per cent in Norfolk.

Failure rate

A Kent Police spokesman said the statistics, which were for 2003-04 but have only just been released by the Home Office, had no impact on recruitment as the force was now fully-staffed and had a number of applicants on a waiting list.

Ian Pointon, chairman of the Kent Police Federation, said he was at a loss to explain why the county's failure rate was higher than others.

He said: "I honestly don't know. The recruitment standard is a national one, so it's not as if Kent has its own test that is tougher than any others.

"There's certainly no problem here in terms of retention or recruitment of officers."

The current Job Related Fitness Test used throughout the country was devised by the Lilleshall National Sports Centre, which also set the pass rate for each component of it.

Potential recruits are required to complete a 15-metre bleep test for five-and-a-half minutes, followed by a 34kg push-strength test and a 35kg pull-strength test.

However, under Home Office guidelines those who meet the standards and are subsequently employed by Kent Police are not required to be tested again unless they join a specialist unit such as firearms or public order.

North Wales Police is thought to be the only force that holds annual fitness check-ups, although Mr Pointon said he did not think they were necessary.

He said: "I think if we want to look at fitness levels then there should be more to it than just having annual tests. We would need to look more at officers' lifestyles, the shifts they work and what facilities are available to them to keep fit.

"It is difficult to quantify how fit the officers at Kent Police are. All I can say is that when I joined more than 25 years ago, a lot of us used to drink and smoke and we would go to the pub after our shifts had ended.

"When you look at officers nowadays, they are more likely to go to the gym, they eat healthier food and they don't smoke. That culture has certainly changed."

LACKING STAMINA: Trainee Police failed fitness tests set by the Home Office

A Kent Police spokesman said the force has an occupational health unit that actively encourages its officers to stay healthy by promoting regular exercise, relaxation and healthy eating.

Health advisors and a physiotherapist are also available, while regular checks are offered to those returning from periods of sickness.

The spokesman added: "Kent has been recognised as one of the forces that has improved work-life balance over the past year."

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www.kentnews.co.uk

Mum's agony over fatal police crash

THE mother of a woman who was killed in a collision with an unmarked police car in Kent has paid tribute to her "beautiful" daughter.

Felicity Austin, 29, from Hadlow near Tonbridge, died at the scene of the crash on the A21 in Pembury near Tunbridge Wells, after her black Renault Megane collided with a black Met Police Skoda on Tuesday, May 5.

In a statement released through the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), which is investigating the incident, her mother said: "Felicity was as beautiful on the inside as she was on the outside, she was everything I could have possibly wished for as a daughter, I was so immensely proud of her.

"Felicity was a mother herself of three gorgeous boys aged 10, seven, and five that she has so sadly had to leave behind and her fiancé Simon. Her family were her life, she lived for the children.

"Her children and Simon are totally devastated and we will give them all the love and support they need to help them gradually be able to come to terms with their tragic loss."

IPCC commissioner Mike Franklin, who is overseeing the investigation, said Miss Austin was due to celebrate her 30th birthday at the end of the month.

He said: "Our investigation will look into whether anything could have been done to have prevented it, focusing on the actions of the officers in the car as well as the planning and decision-making around the operation itself."

The male officer driving the Skoda, which is thought to have had its siren on and blue lights flashing, was cut from the wreckage along with a female colleague

She was airlifted to hospital and was in a stable condition this week. The driver was taken to hospital by road and has since been discharged.

Kent Police's serious collision investigation unit has appealed for witnesses of the crash, which took place between the Fairthorne garage and the North Farm on the A21 roundabout at around 12.30pm.

If you have any information call 01622 798538.

TRAGIC: Car crash victim and mum-of-three Felicity Austin would have been 30 this month

Regenerating hope in the ghetto estate

THE troubled Stanhope Estate in Ashford has become nationally notorious after being dubbed 'No Hope', ***writes Chris Murphy.***

And now a report has branded it, along with other similar estates around the UK, as a "social concentration camp", saying families are cut off from amenities most of us take for granted, like shops and employment.

A study by the left-wing Fabian Society found children raised on these estates, like Stanhope, are worse off than youngsters half a century ago.

The policy think-tank said they are twice as likely to suffer mental health problems; 11 times more likely to be out of work and nine times more likely to live in an unemployed household. They will even die younger.

Stanhope, which went up in the 1960s to cope with the London overspill, was quickly blighted by anti-social behaviour and residents have for years suffered from crime.

The Government may be ploughing millions into a regeneration programme, but the society said this is simply not enough to change the ghetto tag.

But the Chrysalis Consortium, which is looking after the regeneration, said the Fabian report is out of date and a lot of work has already been done to improve the area.

It said Stanhope is getting better – despite the claim it is still worthy of the name No Hope.

There are still houses with shattered fences, gardens piled with rubbish, and a rash of Beware of the Dog signs from neighbours keen to keep unwanted visitors out.

One resident told Kent on Sunday: "I would love to get out of here."

The single mother said: "I do worry sometimes when I go out. I don't think the worry of random violence was like it was a few years ago, but I am still concerned about my safety... estates like this have reputations that are so hard to shake off."

And mum-of-five Michelle Vinter, 37, said: "I've lived here for eight years and there's nothing for kids to do. They call it the No Hope estate."

The Chrysalis Consortium is made up by a partnership between Moat, Gleeson Capital Solutions and Nationwide Commercial.

In a statement to KoS, Tracey Kerly, head of housing at Ashford Borough Council, and Mike Baker, operations manager at Chrysalis, said: "The Fabian Society conducted their research in January, 2008... Since that time, thanks to our regeneration partnership, the neighbourhood has already been transformed. Over 230 out of 323 homes have been refurbished and local people have been moving into the first new homes, on affordable tenancies and as private owners.

"There has been a significant reduction in crime and 83 per cent of residents say they are satisfied with the local housing service.

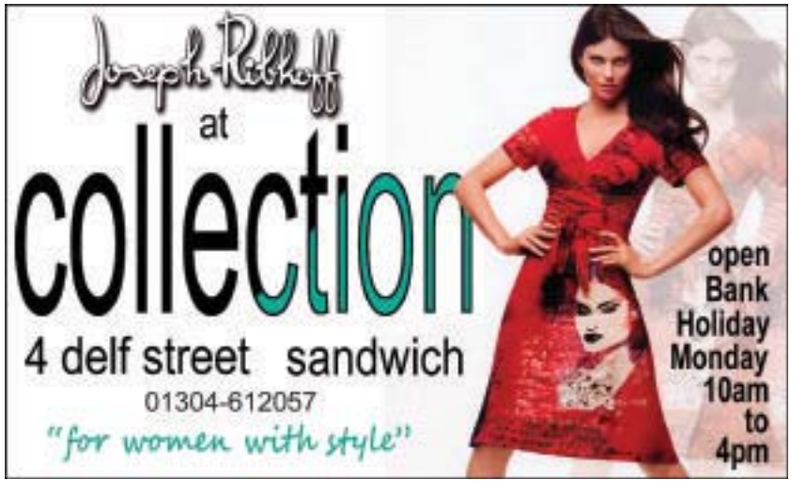
"Things are changing at Stanhope. We encourage everyone to come down and see for themselves how Stanhope is evolving."

They said Stanhope is undergoing a £150m regeneration and a 30-year PFI contract was signed on April 17, 2007, with Ashford council and the Chrysalis Consortium.

The regeneration project will see the refurbishment of 323 homes and the replacement of seven blocks of flats with 442 new high quality homes. Seventy per cent of these, 309 homes, will be available for rent or shared ownership, while 30 per cent, or 133 homes, will be for sale on the open market.

Residents are hoping the programme of regeneration will change its fortunes.

ON THE UP: Stanhope is going through a £150 milion regeneration programme



Musicians unite to hate racism

BANDS, DJs and street dancers will come together next weekend for the third annual Medway Love Music Hate Racism festival.

The line-up for the three-day event includes Delayed Experience, Mecca 2 Medina, Ashley McKenzie, Punjabi Beats, Jashon, Jade's Street Dancers and the Jazz Faction. Sunday will be a dedicated Love DJs Hate Racism day.

Organiser Naeem Lone said: "This year we have fantastic live music by the riverside and more reasons to celebrate the rich and diverse cultures of Medway."

Medway Love Music Hate Racism takes place at the Command House, Chatham, from Saturday to Monday, May 23-25. Visit www.lovemusichateracism-medway.co.uk for more information.

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Fears of greater crime and disorder as service sheds jobs

Union warns probation cuts 'put public at risk'

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knightk@kosmedia.co.uk

BUDGET cuts at Kent Probation could put people at greater risk from crime and disorder, it has been claimed.

This year the service has £439,000 less to spend than the £21.8 million it had in 2008-09, with further cuts expected for at least the next two financial years.

Staffing levels will also be reduced by up to 63 posts to help cope with the shortfall, adding to the 37 jobs shed last year through natural wastage.

Eriks Puce, chairman of the county branch of the probation officers' union Napo, told Kent on Sunday its members were "very concerned".

He said: "The budget cuts for the next three years are significant – a total of a couple of million pounds – and will hit this area quite hard.

"We have been told by management they are looking to make voluntary redundancies, but that will still mean a reduced number of officers supervising offenders in the community and therefore a potential increased risk to the public.

"Whatever resources are left will be used to target higher risk offenders, but clearly there's a significant resource gap. The officers who stay in their jobs will also find themselves under more pressure to bridge the gap. It's not looking good."

According to figures obtained by the Conservatives, the total resource budget for probation boards and trusts in England and Wales will be reduced by £29.3m in 2009-10.

Shadow justice secretary Dominic Grieve said the cuts were a "direct consequence of Labour having run out of money" and that "slashing spending on supervising offenders puts the public at risk".

However, Kent Probation chief officer Sarah Billiald said the service's top priority was to continue to protect the public and reduce re-offending.

She added: "The financial climate is a challenging one for many businesses, both in the private and public sector. By reducing our budget, the Government is encouraging probation as a whole to find more efficient ways of delivering the service we provide to the public and the courts.

"Through careful investment locally and smarter working practices, we aim to provide an improved service to the public overall. Our resources are, and will continue to be, targeted at offenders who pose the greatest risk of harm."

Mrs Billiald added that there were no planned reductions in frontline staff for this year and that jobs would be cut over several years through turnover and voluntary means.

She also revealed that Kent Probation was one of the first in the country to be selected to become a probation trust next April, meaning its relationship with the Government will become more contractual.

The service will also be split into three local delivery units, each with separate budgets, so offenders can be dealt with on a more local level.

Mrs Billiald said: "Our selection as a probation trust is due to our continued excellent performance and our clear ambition for the future. Over the next four years we will implement a strategy that builds on our success and shows our commitment to further enhancing our role in protecting the public and reducing re-offending."

Mr Puce said of the change: "Becoming a trust secures the future of Kent Probation without it being broken up or merged with other areas, but it doesn't help us particularly. We're still in a very difficult situation."

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Shooting club takes potshot at 'wasteful' Olympic range

By CHRIS MURPHY
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

ORGANISERS of the 2012 London Olympics have been blasted for choosing to spend £42 million on a shooting venue at Woolwich – just 10 minutes from a range in Dartford.

Shooting – along with sports such as fencing, weightlifting and water polo – had already faced swingeing cuts of £14m, based on what competitors achieved in Beijing.

But Dartford Clay Shooting Club, founded in 1974, was dismayed to discover the building of the site at Woolwich is set to cost more than the reduction for all those sports.

Club spokesman Richard Bailey said: "It doesn't make sense. We have everything here and can bring it up to Olympic standards. To make the shooting venue at Woolwich safe a massive fence and screen must be erected at extraordinary cost.

"We cannot stand back and allow money to be wasted on a fence while the prospects of sportsmen and women suffer through lack of funding. Governing bodies have a right to be angry when they are losing out and are justifiably questioning the priorities."

He said Woolwich needed £42m spent on it, about £20m more than the original budget, and it will be torn down after the Games.

Supporting Dartford's bid, Phil Boakes, chairman of British Shooting, said: "It is unacceptable to see UK sport and athletes starved of funding.

"If there is money being spent from the overall pot, it should be spent in the pursuit of sport and medals, not the construction of temporary facilities. This is a wasted opportunity. Like every other sport, shooting is desperate for a legacy from the Olympics.

"A shift of venue to Dartford is a win-win decision. Shooting would move to a permanent venue and receive the legacy it badly needs and the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) gets the perfect shooting venue.

"That the money saved might trickle back to restore funding to the other sports is probably a hope too far. Every athlete understands the recession means sacrifices need to be made and they will compete to the best of their ability whatever happens.

BANG TO RIGHTS: Woolwich is the wrong 2012 Olympics shooting venue, say critics

"But athletes in all sports deserve to be given every opportunity for success. And if they have to rein back on expenditure, LOCOG and the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) should do so too."

Mr Bailey added: "The simple fact is that by moving shooting to Dartford, the Olympics get more for less. It will save the taxpayer £25m at the stroke of a pen.

"And beyond 2012, a tangible legacy for the sport and the community is secured.

"International shooting competitions will come to Britain for the first time in 30 years and the facilities will be open to the community all year round. Dartford has space, accessibility, safety, proximity to the Olympic village, and sporting and community legacy."

The club already offers the best Olympic clay shooting training facilities in the UK.

It shares Dartford Marshes with birdwatchers, cyclists, walkers and livestock without interference or safety issues, said Mr Bailey. It is less than half an hour from the Olympic village at Stratford, just 10 minutes further than Woolwich

An ODA official said: "Dartford was ruled out because there are no suitable facilities there. There are shotgun ranges, but none for rifles and pistols. There isn't sufficient transport infrastructure, with only one road into the venue. All of that would have to be upgraded. We would need to have built a satellite village for competitors because it is some distance from the Olympic park."

She added: "The figures being bandied about are not realistic. All the work needed is a lot of money that we just don't have."

Horst Schreiber, secretary general of the International Shooting Sports Federation, said: "We are delighted that Woolwich has been selected.

"It meets all our requirements and allows athletes to stay in the Olympic village."

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NHS dentistry funding boost for patients

THOUSANDS more patients will be able to access NHS dentists in Kent after £2.7 million of additional funding was announced.

NHS West Kent said the investment meant 6,000 more patients in Tonbridge and Aylesford combined, and 4,000 people each in Swanley, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells would benefit.

John Lynch, a dentist from Gravesend, said: "This is a major investment aimed at making sure residents of west Kent have access to any NHS dental treatment they may need, when they need it.

"Having regular check-ups is important. It could save you money, save your teeth and even – through early detection of problems such as mouth cancer – save your life."

As well as general dental procedures such as check-ups, fillings and root canal work, funding will go towards orthodontic procedure such as teeth-straightening for patients in Dartford, Longfield, Gravesend, Maidstone, Tonbridge, Tonbridge Wells and Sevenoaks.

This year, three charges for NHS dental work were brought in; with simple treatments such as check-ups and X-rays costing £16.50, more complex work such as fillings £45.60, and top level treatments including crowns and bridges costing £198.

For more information call the primary care trust's information line on 0800 0850 850 or email your name, address and preferred area to wk-pct.Dental@nhs.net.

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Breaking down the barriers through art

Bipolar sufferer conveys message in exhibition

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

A MANIC depressive aims to break down social barriers by encouraging people from all walks of life to contribute to an art exhibition.

Stephen Finnimore, 57, from Maidstone, has suffered from bipolar disorder for the last 35 years and has organised the Art Uniting People project to give people an equal platform on which to express themselves.

The former chemistry teacher, who now works as a mental health consultant, told Kent on Sunday he did not agree with "pigeon-holing" people.

He added: "Art is a great equaliser because you can't tell from a drawing or painting what the person who created it is like, nor can you tell what mood they were in at the time.

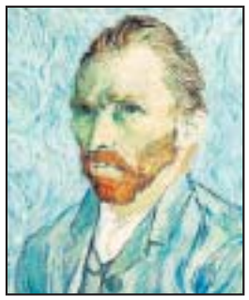
"Art doesn't discriminate against people. Anybody can contribute work to this exhibition and they can label their work however they wish.

"One might say 'I'm a recovering schizophrenic' whereas the information on another could be limited to 'My name is Bill'."

Dr Finnimore's life changed forever when, as a 22-year-old student in France, he began to experience the dramatic mood swings common among bipolar patients.

He said: "All of a sudden I started having these manic attacks. I thought I could speak fluent French when I couldn't, and had all sorts of strange thoughts running through my head. I ended up in a French mental hospital via a police station.

"Today I'm constantly on medication, my kidney function is down to just 19 per cent and I'm very overweight. I tried to commit suicide in 2000, but I haven't been in hospital since then, so that's encouraging for me.



VOICE: Stephen suffers from the same illness which is thought to have affected van Gogh

Confession

"Bipolar disorder can be a fairly devastating illness, as any of them can. But now I have my own flat and am helping to train mental health nurses and psychologists as I've met a lot of people and learned a lot about my condition over the past 35 years."

Awareness of bipolar disorder has increased in recent years thanks in part to actor and comedian Stephen Fry's confession that he suffers from a mild form of the illness.

It is thought the legendary 19th century artist Vincent van Gogh – who cut off his own ear – was also a manic depressive.

Dr Finnimore said the theme of the Art Uniting People exhibition – which will be held at County Hall, Maidstone, for three weeks from July 4 – was recovery.

He said: "Whenever I'm in a raised mood I paint, and sometimes I'll frame my pictures and it gives me a lot of pleasure.

"It also gives me something to occupy myself with and I think that's one of the most important things about recovery.

"But there will be all sorts of different people exhibiting, some of whom do not suffer from any illnesses, and all will have their own view of what recovery means to them."

Visit www.artunitingpeople.org.uk for more information.

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Sir Graeme is recognised for voluntary contribution

A MAN who has led Kent's regeneration for years on a voluntary basis has become only the second recipient of the prestigious Kent Invicta Award, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

HONOURABLE MAN: Sir Graeme Odgers

Last year comedian and tireless charity fundraiser Dave Lee received it, and this year it was the turn of Sir Graeme Odgers.

The 75-year-old said it was a great honour – the award recognising his outstanding achievement for the county.

At his home near Sevenoaks, he told Kent on Sunday: "This is a fantastic county. Many people don't realise just how much it has to offer. It has been my privilege to promote it, and I continue to do so."

Sir Graeme has a history in industry and public sector.

He worked for Tarmac, was the group managing director of BT, chief executive of McAlpine and was then appointed by then minister Michael Heseltine to run the Monopolies and Mergers Commission for five years, which is now the Competition Commission.

He said: "At that time, I hadn't really thought about getting involved in Kent's affairs at all. But I was approached to take on the chair of Locate in Kent."

He did that from 1998 to 2006, and ensured the agency created thousands of new jobs for the county and attracted millions of pounds of investment to Kent.

Regeneration

Locate in Kent was independently ranked as the Best Regional Agency Worldwide and was the only European agency listed in the top three of Overall World Leading and World-Class Performances.

Sir Graeme is now currently vice-chairman of the Kent Partnership, chairman of the Kent Economic Board and chairman of the Marlowe Theatre Development Trust.

He is also a Deputy Lieutenant for Kent and a Kent Ambassador.

He said: "I had always had an interest in economic regeneration and I had picked up the Kent bug. It keeps nagging at you, it says, isn't this a wonderful county, the county of Kent that we live in.

"It's been a wonderful experience to get to know this fantastic place in some depth"

He said: "I have done all these things in Kent without any financial payment at all. I suppose it is all that which has made them think this is a reasonable chap to give this award to."

Kent County Council Chairman Peter Lake presented the engraved silver trophy and Sir Graeme's name will be engraved on an honours board to be hung in the council chamber.

Meanwhile, the 133 Field Company Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (Volunteers) have become the fifth recipient of the historic award of Freedom of the Borough of Ashford.

The authority presented the corps with the highest civic honour it can give at a special ceremony. It was in recognition of the unit's service to long-running ties with Ashford.

Ashford mayor John Link served with the REME during his national service.

He said: "In the last few years, the 133 Field Company REME has come a long way, providing servicemen to serve along side the regular Army in many recent conflicts."

'A&E closure will not be the last'

CAMPAIGNERS have warned that the closure of A&E and downgrading of the maternity unit at a Kent hospital could lead to further cuts to services, ***writes Jenna Pudelek***.

The far-reaching plans to shake up hospital services in north Kent and south-east London were approved by the Health Secretary Alan Johnson despite overwhelming local opposition.

Now, four years after proposals were first put forward, Queen Mary's Sidcup (QMS) is set to lose its A&E department but retain a 24-hour 'urgent care centre'. The go-ahead has also been given to downgrade maternity services to a midwifery-led birthing centre. Savings for the NHS trust are said to total £30 million.

Mr Johnson accepted the proposals from the independent reconfiguration panel (IRP), which was asked to review the plans, which affect the QMS, Princess Royal University Hospital (PRU), Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woolwich (QEH) and University Hospital Lewisham (UHL) after local councillors refused them.

Disaster

Dr John Lister, of campaign group London Health Emergency, said he was disappointed rather than surprised by the decision. "It's a disaster all round," he said.

"In Bexley people have the prospect of a journey to a hospital outside their borough in an emergency. The other hospitals are not on a scale that can handle the extra load and there has been no talk of investment.

"It's an extraordinarily poor proposal and it has been dressed up as some kind of improvement, which is totally misleading."

He said the decision would mean that A&E departments at the PRU, OEH and UHL would be more crowded and cause misery for patients across south-east London, not just in Sidcup.

CONCERN: Lib Dem Duncan Borrowman says PFI deals have been 'sucking local healthcare dry for decades'

Asked whether the future of the QMS was now in doubt and further service losses were likely, Dr Lister, who has a Phd in health policy, said: "It is virtually certain.

"They wanted to solve the cash problem in the newly-merged trust. This was needed to put it back in the balance, if that's possible. But it is only a matter of weeks or months before the next round of cuts."

The new 'super trust' South London Healthcare NHS, which was created by merging the QMS, QEH and Bromley Hospitals, has a deficit of £20.4m and an accumulated debt of £121.5m.

Duncan Borrowman, a Liberal Democrat parliamentary candidate in Sidcup, said finances had been put above patient care.

"This has been caused by decades of successive Conservative and Labour governments throwing money at private finance initiative (PFI) hospitals.

"PFI deals soak up money into the contracts, not into patient care. The PFI contract at the PRU in Farnborough, introduced by the Conservatives, has been sucking local healthcare dry.

"The same has happened with the QEH in Woolwich, planned by the Tories but brought in by Labour. Queen Mary's has sat in the middle, a publicly funded hospital leached dry by neighbouring hospitals."

Chipping away

He also said he now feared the closure of the QMS and a further loss of services.

"That is a concern," Mr Borrowman said. He added that if services were further chipped away from the hospital it would end up closing.

Dr Peter Barrett, chair of the NHS services shake-up experts the IRP, presented its findings last Friday, which included proposals contrary to the original plans, called A Picture of Health.

He said: "We agreed unanimously that although keeping health services as they are is not an option, considerable work needs to be done to ensure the changes offer the quality services patients both expect and deserve. No major changes to services should take place at QMS before the local NHS has undertaken further work.

"The local NHS and authorities must work together urgently to define how services will work in the future to provide patients with a seamless service between primary, secondary, community and social care.

"Staffing requirements also need to be reviewed and we have recommended that the financial viability of the proposals be reassessed.

"We also expect the local NHS to work with transport partners to mitigate the effects of the proposals on those most affected, and to agree with overview and scrutiny committees a comprehensive and inclusive plan to engage with the public."

• ***You can see the full report at www.irpanel.org.uk.***

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Junkie jailed after slashing have-a-go hero

A KNIFE-wielding drug addict has been jailed for six years after slashing a have-a-go hero across the face, scarring him for life.

Marcus Campbell, 30, of Rotary Gardens, Gillingham, pleaded guilty to causing grievous bodily and possession of crack cocaine and heroin.

At Maidstone Crown Court, Judge Jeremy Carey ordered Campbell to serve a minimum of three years, minus 110 days already served on remand.

The court heard how Campbell assaulted a woman in Watling Street, Gillingham, on December 20 last year. Matthew Bray, 25, from Chatham, attempted to stop the attack but was punched and then slashed across the face by Campbell. The wound needed 26 stitches and has left a permanent scar.

SCARRED: Campbell's attack on Matthew Bray left a wound needing 26 stitches

In recognition of his heroism, Judge Carey recommended Mr Bray be nominated for a commendation from the High Sheriff of Kent.

Afterwards, Mr Bray said he did not regret going to the woman's aid.

He said: "When it first happened I said I wouldn't do it again, but if it was any man or any woman, I would always be there. If a member of my family was attacked I would expect someone to help in that situation."

Det Con Steve Goldsmith said: "We are satisfied with this sentence, which should act as a serious deterrent.

"Medway police launched a swift investigation which resulted in the arrest and charging of Campbell in January. We have taken a serious offender off the streets."

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Council is accused of not doing enough to promote a gay cultural scene

City is just 'not gay enough'

A LABOUR peer has waded into a dispute between a campaign group and a local authority over whether a cathedral city is gay enough, ***writes Jenna Pudelek.***

The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) organisation Pride in Canterbury has been at loggerheads with the city council over the authority's alleged failure to engage with them and support a gay bar in the city.

Andrew Brettell, the group's chairman, claimed the city council had been "giving us the run-around" and took their complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

He said the council had failed to promote LGBT culture in the area and had not responded to a complaint made about the issue in November last year.

The council has denied the group's claims.

According to Theo Grzegorczyk, political advisor to Lord Waheed Alli, the media entrepreneur and politician, the LGO has stated in its provisional findings that "regulations do not place a duty on councils to promote LGBT culture… [We are] not aware of any statutory requirement for councils to promote LGBT culture, and so [we are] unable to criticise the council".

UNTAPPED MARKET: It is claimed that Canterbury is missing out on 'pink tourism'

In response, Mr Brettell and his partner Martin Lammas told KoS: "The council may be under no obligation to promote LGBT culture, but, if they are committed to diversity, surely they should want to be doing more."

Mr Grzegorczyk got involved in the dispute on behalf of Lord Alli because, he said, the issue was exactly the kind of situation the Equality Bill, which was debated in Parliament on Monday, would seek to stop: "For all who have questioned whether or not the Equality Duty is necessary: here is your answer. This is a council who have been able to wiggle their way out of engaging with members of their own community, simply because the law doesn't require it."

Asked how he felt about the LGO's response, Mr Brettell said: "We are very disappointed that after six years involvement we have made so little progress."

The group has called on the council to provide an LGBT community drop-in centre, and complained about the lack of a gay bar and regular LGBT culture in the city. Mr Brettell said the city was missing out on income from 'pink tourism'.

A spokesman for the LGO said their response to the complaints had not yet been finalised but a provisional response had been sent out.

Colin Carmichael, chief executive of the council, said: "The council strongly refutes any suggestion by Pride in Canterbury that we do not want to engage with the LGBT community, and are very disappointed they have referred this to the Ombudsman.

"We believe that through regular correspondence with Pride in Canterbury over many years, we have thoroughly addressed their concerns and shown ourselves to be a council that has taken action to address the needs and priorities of the LGBT community."

Black hero is more than a name on war memorial list

A TOURING exhibition celebrating the life of the pioneering black footballer Walter Tull has finally reached his home county.

The Folkestone-born forward, who played for both Northampton Town and Tottenham Hotspur, was Britain's first black outfield professional and also became its first black Army officer during World War One.

An exhibition celebrating his life has been touring the country since September and has now reached Dover – a town Tull and his family also had strong links with.

Maggie Stephenson-Wright, founder of the Dover War Memorial Project, said he was an important figure in black history: "Walter Tull was a pioneer and was immensely successful in two careers.

"He was an icon for a modern age and is a real example of just what you can achieve if you put your mind to it. Apparently he was a very nice chap too, which is never a bad thing."

The grandson of a slave from Barbados, he was born in Folkestone in 1888 and attended what is now Mundell Primary School.

Despite losing both of his parents at an early age, he later crossed racial boundaries to play football at the highest domestic level before his career was cut short by the war.

In 1917, Tull was commissioned second lieutenant in the Middlesex Regiment of the Army and later recommended for officer training. He was so well-respected by his peers that when he was killed in action in March, 1918, aged just 29, his fellow soldiers attempted to drag his body out of no man's land.

Today Tull's name can be found on the memorial outside the Maison Dieu town council office in Dover, as well as the one in nearby River and at the top of the Road to Remembrance in Folkestone.

The Crossing the White Line exhibition – designed by the City of Westminster Archives – was officially opened on Monday at the Dover Discovery Centre.

The Dover War Memorial Project also helped put the display together by carrying out much of the research into Tull's family.

Mrs Stephenson-Knight said of the project: "We think it's important that people who died in battle are remembered as people rather than just names on a list."

The Crossing the White Line exhibition will be available to view at Dover library every Monday to Saturday – except May 25 – until June 29.

For more information about the display visit www.crossingthewhiteline.com.

IN THE NET: Walter Tull was both the first black officer in the Army, left, and the first black outfield footballer playing in Britain. He is pictured above in his Spurs strip

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Golfers tee-d off by taunts from youths

HIGH jinks by youths at Sundridge Park Golf Course turned into alleged scuffles and ended with eight people arrested, including members of the Bromley club.

Two were taken to hospital and one remains there in a stable condition after it is claimed the two sides exchanged blows with golf clubs and pieces of wood.

The police were called to the prestigious course and taken on the course's electric golf carts to the scene of several incidents.

One member of the club had been arrested and was then allegedly attacked by the mother of one of the youths as he sat in a buggy.

Met police are now trying to unravel exactly what happened last Sunday.

It appears to have begun when a group of youths broke through a fence to the west course and taunted golfers playing.

INCIDENTS: Police are investigating some alleged scuffles at Sundridge Park Golf Club

One may have taken down his trousers and made obscene gestures. They then took a flag and vanished into the woods, chased by a golfer.

The incident spread to the east course when cars arrived and parents of some of the children are said to have verbally abused golfers who had no idea about the previous incident.

General manager at the club Robert Walden said: "We are helping the police with these incidents, but we know little for certain. We want to work with the community here, and wish to avoid anything like this happening again."

Police said a 53-year-old male from Hayes arrested on suspicion of causing actual bodily harm has been bailed to return to Bromley Police Station on July 17.

All the other people arrested have been bailed to return to Bromley Police Station on August 12. They are a male, 39, from Plaistow, arrested on suspicion of committing a Section 5 Public Order Offence which is using language and behaviour likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress; a male, 48, from Keston, arrested on suspicion of causing grievous bodily harm, plus a 49-year-old male from Plaistow, 16-year-old male from St Mary Cray, 15-year-old male and 33-year-old female, both from Downham, and 13-year-old male all arrested on suspicion of affray.

The 17-year-old remains in hospital with head injuries, but it is believed he will not need surgery. The 13-year-old was treated, also for head injuries, and released.

New homes to leave art in the dark

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

PLANS for a three-story housing development are threatening the future of a publicly-funded community art gallery.

Mick Etherton, the director of Beeping Bush Ltd, a voluntary arts and multimedia organisation in Margate, said the planning committee at Thanet District Council now face choosing between cultural regeneration or private property development.

Beeping Bush's Community Pharmacy Gallery in the town's cultural quarter was established in 2001 using a grant for £80,000 from the district council, which reinstated the Grade-II listed building's roof lights and rooftop terrace as a workshop area.

Mr Etherton said if plans for the townhouses get the go-ahead the gallery would be completely overshadowed by a 40ft wall.

He said. "This gallery was specifically built and light was put in for the benefit of the community. If they pass this [development] the money will have been wasted. It should be looked into."

Beeping Bush has been running the 2 Days' Laughter Comedy Shorts screenings and awards event for the past two years, which this year involved 179 filmmakers from across the South East. The organisation has also been running a two-day festival of horror short films for seven years.

Other members of Margate's arts scene, which is starting to thrive thanks to projects such as Beeping Bush, have been left dismayed by the proposals.

Claudia Leaf, who runs a youth theatre group called Chalkfoot in the seaside town, said: "Unless you get that vibe of people making work and using the spaces productively, it's not a 'cultural quarter', it's just another shopping opportunity and one that won't last without the presence of working artists."

Mr Etherton has been fighting the proposals since the first planning application in 2004, which was rejected last year.

LIGHT: Beeping Bush organisers say the creative workspaces rely on large skylights

Since then the organisation has been awarded a further grant of £18,000 from Margate Renewal Partnership, bringing total public investment in the building to nearly £100,000.

But Mr Etherton said the plans for two three-storey two-bedroom townhouses would destroy the gallery's unique selling point – the light pouring in from the 'roof lanterns'.

"It will be useless," he said. "That's why it is so ridiculous we have had funding to convert it into a gallery. Councillors have to decide whether they want artists and culture or just any kind of development.

"We are raising the profile of the Old Town and these plans have nothing to do with the community or arts regeneration."

The gallery is well used and a series of exhibitions have been planned for the summer, which Mr Etherton said would be put in jeopardy by the development.

Derek Harding, programme director at Margate Renewal Partnership, said: "I'm concerned for the gallery's future and have raised the issue of light with the planning department."

A date has yet to be set for the application to go the planning committee.

Ex-prison worker on drug supply charges

A FORMER prison officer from Herne Bay has been charged with smuggling drugs into Elmley Prison on the Isle of Sheppey.

Zoe Spenser-Campbell, 25, of High Street, Herne Bay, previously employed as a SERCO officer, was charged with conspiracy to supply controlled drugs into HMP Elmley. Her boyfriend, labourer Jason Howsam, 26, was charged with the same offence.

Officers arrested the pair in Herne Bay on Wednesday morning.

Both Howsam and Spenser-Campbell appeared before Canterbury Magistrates Court this week.

MP's stark warning if council buys river crossing for £1

Sale will tunnel into community funds

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

THE proposed sale of the Medway Tunnel for just £1 could lead to toll charges and higher council tax bills, warns a leading Labour MP.

Minister for the South East Jonathan Shaw said the transfer of ownership from the Rochester Bridge Trust to Tory-run Medway Council represents a "bad deal" for residents, who he says could be forced to help cover a £2 million yearly shortfall in maintenance cash.

The Chatham and Aylesford MP revealed this week that he had voiced his fears to representatives of the Charity Commission, which has the final say on whether the sale should go ahead.

Mr Shaw said: "The meeting was useful and gave us the opportunity to discuss at length my concerns. I was very surprised to learn the commission was not aware the deal will leave a £2m shortfall or that the Government will not be adopting the tunnel.

"These two principles are paramount to my objections and are why I feel this is such a bad deal for Medway residents. These facts alone are compelling reasons for not approving it."

The Rochester Bridge Trust has built and maintained numerous Medway crossings since medieval times, and agreed to take on ownership of the £80m Medway Tunnel when it was first proposed by Kent County Council in the late 1980s.

Medway Council has been responsible for maintaining and operating the structure since it opened in 1996, and requested to buy it from the trust to simplify and clarify the authority's management role.

The sale of the tunnel will also include a one-off payment of £3.6m from the trust to help with its upkeep. However, Mr Shaw said that figure was not enough to ensure the structure's future and that it would leave a £2m annual deficit.

He said: "I have spoken publicly about my concern regarding the details of the sale and I am not convinced the deal is in the best interest of Medway's residents.

COSTLY: MP Jonathan Shaw is concerned maintenance of the Medway Tunnel will be an expensive drain on the area's funds

"In view of the facts, I feel the long-term future of the tunnel will not be secured by the transfer agreement and the effect of any transfer will inevitably end up costing my constituents. I urge Medway Council, the Rochester Bridge Trust and the Charity Commission to review their positions and halt this bad deal."

Mr Shaw is asking residents to support his campaign by signing a petition at www.jonathanshaw.org.uk, which more than 1,000 people have already done.

A Medway Council spokesman said: "We are still in discussions with the Rochester Bridge Trust about the transfer of the tunnel to the council and the payment of a significant one-off grant to allow the council to undertake major works in the tunnel.

"We are hoping to conclude those discussions in the next few months."

The 725-metre Medway Tunnel was the first immersed-tube tunnel to be built in England and only the second in the UK, the other being at Conwy on the north coast of Wales. It is used by about 46,000 vehicles every day.

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Whitehall meeting is part of consultation on improving lives of people with autism

Charlotte's dream of a house with a garden

WHITEHALL MEETING: Charlotte Lowery, centre, and Carol Pope with care minister Phil Hope

By JENNA PUDELEK
jenna. pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

"I WOULD like to live in a house". That's what a keen Medway gardener with autism told a Government minister who asked what would most improve her quality of life.

Charlotte Lowery, who lives in Walderslade, near Chatham, met care minister Phil Hope as part of consultation involving people with autism and others affected by the lifelong condition.

"I asked the minister what he was going to do to help people with autism choose where they want to live," she said. "I want a house with a garden. I also want someone to help me go on holiday, but I've been waiting for the funding for two years."

Miss Lowery, 23, has been waiting to see if funding is available from Kent County Council so she can at last enjoy her dream holiday to Disneyland Paris.

The Government's autism strategy is to be announced at the end of this year and comes after the National Autistic Society's I Exist campaign, which found people with the condition feel isolated, ignored and unable to get support in areas including health and employment.

Inadequate

Tom Madders, policy officer at the NAS, said: "There is a general lack of understanding and support.

"People want to be able to enjoy the same rights and freedoms as everybody else. I Exist found 40 per cent of people with autism are still living at home with their parents and depend on them emotionally and financially and for any kind of social life."

He said adults with autism lacked support from local authorities because they fall outside of eligibility criteria for social care services.

KCC has begun to take steps to address the problem and last month published the findings of its autistic spectrum disorders select committee.

The committee has also acknowledged that people with autism are struggling to access the right support from health and social care services.

The I Exist campaign found at least one in three adults with autism was experiencing serious mental health difficulties due to inadequate support.

Mr Madders said: "Lack of support means people with autism often feel isolated and can be confused about their condition. That can lead to all sorts of mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety. Also, some of the behaviours associated with autism can be wrongly picked up as mental health problems and vice versa. Misdiagnosis can be a problem and the wrong sort of support offered."

He said part of the Government's strategy includes basic training about autism for GPs and NHS staff.

There was a similar problem with a lack of understanding about the condition among employers. Disability employment advisors, who support people with disabilities get into training and work, also have no training about autism.

Mr Madders said: "Only 15 per cent of adults with autism are in paid employment, which is an appalling statistic. There are still huge issues for children as well as for adults. Sometimes there is this worrying misconception that autism does not affect adults.

"The campaign was about addressing issues of public awareness as well as services. The lack of support and recognition that these people exist was reflected in the survey.

"We are keen for as many people with autism, their families and friends – anyone directly or indirectly involved – to take part in this consultation. This is our opportunity to really change the way things work for adults with autism."

Passion

Miss Lowery lives with her mother and attends the NAS Robbie Centre in Gravesend during the day.

Carol Pope, her support worker who went with her to meet Mr Hope in his Whitehall office, added: "Charlotte's real passion is gardening, which is why she would like to live in a house.

"We're helping her to learn daily living skills and one of her next steps will be growing her own vegetables. With more support she could lead a more independent life and that's what we told the minister."

To take part in the consultation and watch Miss Lowery interviewing Mr Hope, visit www.autism.org.uk.

News and sport updated daily
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Doug's last throw is a USA hit

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knightk@kosmedia.co.uk

A GLADIATOR, a bodybuilder and a Kent building surveyor have teamed up to take the American wrestling scene by storm.

Sevenoaks scrapper Doug Williams may not possess the most fearsome qualification of the three, but his 16 years in the sports entertainment business make him the most experienced member of TNA Wrestling's new British Invasion team.

He and his new team-mates – Welsh giant Rob Terry and Gladiators star Nick 'Oblivion' Aldis – appeared for the first time together on the Impact television programme earlier this month.

The worldwide exposure has the potential to turn Williams into a star, but at 36 he admits it was a break he thought may have passed him by.

FALL GUY: Doug Williams (black trunks) is delighted by his Stateside success

He said: "I didn't really think this day would ever come because my wrestling style is more suited to Japan, but thankfully I've been able to adapt.

"Getting to wrestle for TNA was almost going to be my last shot at the big time because WWE isn't really interested in people who are over 30 or shorter than 6ft.

"But I'm grateful to be given this chance and it rounds out my career quite nicely."

TNA (Total Non-stop Action) was founded in 2002 by wrestler Jeff Jarrett, who wanted to compete with the global powerhouse that is WWE.

His company, which is now owned by the eco-friendly power station firm Panda Energy, features a blend of talented youngsters and veterans battling it out in a six-sided ring.

British fans who watch the promotion every week on the digital channel Bravo turned out in their thousands when its stars toured the UK earlier this year, giving Williams the chance to wrestle in front of a packed crowd at Wembley Arena.

But before that he had made only three televised appearances for TNA, none of which featured him in as prominent a role as his new spot with the British Invasion.

Williams said: "I renewed my contract in March so I knew they were planning to use me more, but I've been surprised at how quickly everything has happened since the team was put together.

"We've filmed quite a lot and the company seems to be behind us all the way. It's early days but everything seems to be going well, and I'm sure things will get even better over time."

And he added: "I'd like to have a singles run with more of a focus on myself one day, but for the time being I'm more than happy to help to try and make this tag team successful."

Meanwhile, fellow Kent grappler Nigel McGuinness is also being seen on screens across America as a result of his Ring of Honor promotion landing a national television deal.

However, the 33-year-old from Maidstone – who was recently involved in a storyline with wrestling legend Ric Flair – has been forced to relinquish his position as the group's top star due to him needing surgery on both arms.

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Pot black for charity

IN MEMORY: Kirk Anderson died in 1995. Pictured from left to right are Ian Hubbard, Jordan Church, Ian Kettel and Kirk's brother, William Anderson

SOME of the world's top pool players are taking part in a charity pool and snooker event to raise money to help battle a lethal heart condition that killed a fit sportsman while he played football.

Kirk Anderson, 23, from Maidstone, collapsed and died while playing for East Malling, ***writes Chris Murphy.***

Unknowingly, he was suffering from a heart muscle disease called hypertrophic cardiomyopathy.

Now his brother William, has put together an event to raise at least £5,000 for a campaign organisation.

He contacted pool pros Ian Kettel from Lordswood, Jordan Church from Rainham and Ian Hubbard from Maidstone, to take on all comers at the tournament at the Chatham Pool and Snooker Club in Military Road. All three are in the top 40 world players, with both Ians having been in the top 10.

William, from Faversham, said the event is to raise money for the Cardiomyopathy Association, which supports families affected by the heart condition: "Kirk loved classical music and playing the flute, and had come to Maidstone from Scotland to work for flute manufacturer Trevor James. But his greatest love was football. He was a striker and scored in the game in which he died.

"He was a popular lad about to start his life in earnest when he died so suddenly in 1995. It has taken us a long time to come to terms with what happened, but now we want to help by raising money to help other families affected by this condition."

The heart condition can strike people of all ages, even babies. It is the main cause of sudden death in those under 35. But if it discovered early enough, treatment can often mean living a full life.

The charity provides support to those who affected and raises awareness within the medical profession.

The three-day competition starts on June 12. To take part or for more details contact Kevin Rackham at k.rackham@tiscali.co.uk.

To donate money see www.justgiving.com/poolsnookerextravaganza.

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Howletts and Port Lympne Wild Animal Parks are teaming up with Kent on Sunday to offer readers an exclusive prize giveaway for up to four people.

The African Experience at Port Lympne Wild Animal Park is Kent's answer to Africa. As well as the breathtaking views to the French coast, visitors will enjoy close encounters with animals such as rhinos, giraffe, ostrich, zebra, eland and wildebeest who roam wild as if they were on the plains of Africa.

The day-time safaris consist of a 90-minute ride during your visit to the park, and the on-board commentary will tell you all you need to know about the fascinating creatures.

A half-way stop is made at the Discovery Zone, known as the bug stop. Visitors will see a variety of beasts and bugs such as scorpions, zebra mice and red-footed tortoise.

We have three of these prizes up for grabs, to enter this fantastic prize draw, simply answer the question and send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to African Safari Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent, TN25 6SR. The closing date is May 23, 2009.

Question: Which park is home to The African Experience?

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Anger over town hall 'spies' going through your bins

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

THE group responsible for Kent's waste strategy has come under fire for "spying" on homeowners' rubbish without their permission.

As part of a survey into recycling habits, the Kent Waste Partnership collected 32 tonnes of rubbish from 2,146 households throughout the county. The bin bags were later sorted through by hand.

Of all the 13 district councils that make up the partnership with Kent County Council, the only one that did not take part in the operation was Dartford.

The Conservative-led council promised residents in its 2007 manifesto that it would not take part in waste audits.

Deputy leader Cllr Tony Martin said there were better ways to gain information on household habits than by going behind people's backs.

He said: "We think it's more beneficial to try to work with people. You don't necessarily get the best out of people if you are seen to be spying on them.

"Some will have private items in their rubbish that they would not like people looking at and I would be upset if I found out people had been going through my bins without asking me first.

"What other councils decide to do is a matter for them, but we were not prepared to break our manifesto promise by taking part in this survey."

The waste audit was carried out by contractor WasteWorks over a four-week spell between November and December last year, and also involved the firm going through rubbish taken to five of the county's 19 recycling centres.

A Kent Waste Partnership spokesman said residents were not made aware of the survey beforehand because evidence nationally suggests people change their behaviour if they are warned.

He also pointed out that all the rubbish collected was heaped together so it would be impossible for the people sorting through it to know which items had come from what house.

Obligations

The spokesman added: "Many residents understand the need for businesses and local councils to plan for the future. There is also a high expectation – and rightly so – that taxpayers' funds be used appropriately.

"The waste survey that was carried out was a means of assisting the Kent councils to live up to these obligations.

"The approach taken by the waste partnership is a balanced way of securing the information needed to plan for future public services and achieving it in a way that's sensitive to any concerns about privacy."

The results of the waste audit showed that of all the rubbish collected, 34 per cent was food and 16 per cent paper and card. Dense plastic and "pet bedding, etc" were the next most common materials found with seven per cent, followed by glass with six per cent.

Of all the districts covered in the survey, Maidstone had much higher rates of potentially-recyclable materials being found in general rubbish.

■ CLEAN Kent has teamed up with CrimeStoppers to allow the county's residents to report incidents of fly-tipping anonymously.

Information given over the confidential telephone line will be passed on to the police and the Clean Kent enforcement team for investigation.

The number is 0800 555111. Alternatively call Clean Kent direct on 0845 345 0210.

UP FOR IT: Stuart with his disabled son Alfie

Dad is riding high to raise son's cash

DEVOTED dad Stuart Darby has promised to cycle more than 15 miles on a penny-farthing to raise money for his disabled son.

Six-year-old Alfie suffers from four-limb cerebral palsy and will be receiving botox treatment later this year, with hopes it will allow more flexibility in the bottom half of his body.

An expensive physiotherapy course that aims to improve his posture and allow him to sit upright will follow, with the youngster's parents hoping to raise £6,000 from a charity fun day later this month to help pay for it.

Roofer Stuart, 34, from Sevenoaks, said he was planning to ride his Victorian bicycle on a 15.2-mile round circuit from the Hastings Arms pub in Rainham, which is hosting the event on Sunday, May 24.

He said: "I bought the penny-farthing especially for charity events like this because I thought it would be a bit different and it shows I'm putting some effort in. I've fallen off it about five times so far but I'm starting to get used to it now."

Mr Darby and his fellow bike riders are due to leave the Hastings Arms at 11.30am before the fun day starts half-an-hour later.

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Festival set to build on architects' foundations

THE county's architectural gems are to be highlighted in a major month-long festival.

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

It covers the whole of the South East and takes in nine counties, but organisers say Kent will have the lion's share to offer lovers of buildings, as well as those who are simply curious, with many attractions free.

Of the 80 events planned with funding from the Arts Council, 26 are Kent-based and all have the theme Better Places, Better Spaces.

The organiser, the Royal Institute of British Architects, said people often ask themselves questions like what is it made of? what is that for? and why is it designed like that? Well, this is the opportunity to find out.

There will be guided tours of new buildings by their architects, the chance to see places you pass every day in a new way, and the opportunity to get a new perspective through artists' eyes. You can also take part in family workshops to help spot the stars of the next generation of architects.

The South East event was launched following the end of the nationwide Architecture Week, which ran for a decade from 1997.

Helen Wren, director of RIBA South East, said: "People in this region have a huge appetite for architecture-related events... we live in a beautiful part of the country, with amazingly varied buildings."

Architects have created Look Up, Look Around fun quizzes to download from the website, for children and families to discover building details across the region.

One novel aspect of the festival is called Architect in the House. This lets home owners quiz a RIBA chartered architect for a donation to homeless charity Shelter.

Here's a run down of what you can expect.

• In the Ashford area, stained glass window designer Alex Le Rossignol hosts a celebration of creativity in the ancient church of St Mary's, Smeeth, in its newly-built oak room.

The church features a window by Ms Le Rossignol and she will show recent work she has done with other architects.

Examples of work by Stephen Foster will also be on show: he created carved and gilded doors for the church. During the Festival Ms Le Rossignol is also opening her own studio, a beach hut in the garden of Smeeth Rectory.

• Also near Ashford, two artists inspired by architecture are opening their studios in Brabourne Lees: Sue Chapman will show photographs and art inspired by local buildings; and Liz Garnett will display her architectural photographs, and explain the advantages of using a large format camera.

• In Canterbury there will be an online buildings quiz by local architect Khirstie Myles.

The city also has two schools of architecture and visitors can see the work of final degree students at both, as well as an exhibition by students at Canterbury Castle.

• In Challock you can tour houses for animals with their architects. SuperKingdom was designed by Consarc Architects with artists London Fieldworks, to create unique animal residences, based on despots' palaces.

• In Chatham you can see an architects' tour of the RIBA award-shortlisted Joiners Shop.

Baynes and Mitchell Architects refurbished the Grade-II listed 18th century building, originally used by carpenters.

• In Deal, architect Peter Bernamont has devised an online Look Up, Look Around quiz.

Also, architects of the RIBA award-shortlisted Deal Pier Café, Niall McLaughlin Architects, will answer questions about its design and materials.

And artist Rebecca Murphy's paintings and drawings of the Deal that is disappearing will be exhibited on the High Street. Ms Murphy will run two family workshops, including visits to the Cannon Street/Golf Road gasometer site and Deal Pier, too.

• Dover has plenty of military architecture and visitors are welcome at the Drop Redoubt and the Grand Shaft at the Dover Western Heights open weekend, organised by the Western Heights Preservation Society.

• Folkestone sees a number of events, including an online quiz by Roger Joyce Associates.

Quarterhouse, the new live entertainment venue, has also been creating a splash and there are free guided tours with Alison Brooks Architects, to gain insight into the process behind the building. Visitors can experience Home Sweet Home when you become a resident of the South East's smallest city: given a tiny flat-packed property, you can decorate your house as you please, meet your neighbours and explore.

• Clare Danstead, an artist and teacher,

GEMS: Clockwise from top left: Quarterhouse; Deal Pier; The Grange, home to Augustus Pugin; Architects all over Kent have compiled Look Up, Look Around photo quizzes featuring details from town centres, such as this one of the bandstand on the Pantiles in Tunbridge Wells; and SuperKingdom

Pictures: From top left: Dennis Gilbert, Niall Mclaughlin Architects, The Landmark Trust, Look Up, Look Around quiz, London Fieldworks

opens her studio in Etchinghill to show new work in response to her home environment.

• In Gravesend and Medway, photographers are encouraged to snap their favourite building. The best pictures will go up at Towncentric Tourist Information Centre, Gravesend.

Also at Towncentric, children aged seven-plus can plan their ideal town using professional models; and adults can enjoy a guided architectural and historical walk.

• Artist Margherita Gramegna will run the Digi-Gift-Card mobile centre, touring various locations in the Medway Towns. Using digital media, with the historic buildings of Medway as background, people can create their own stylish, modern postcards.

• Visitors to Margate's Turner Contemporary Project Space on the High Street can explore its Sound of Music exhibition with artist Andy Malone.

• And in Ramsgate, The Grange, a Grade-I listed house designed and lived in by Augustus Pugin while he was designing the House of Lords, will be open, as will St Augustine's Church.

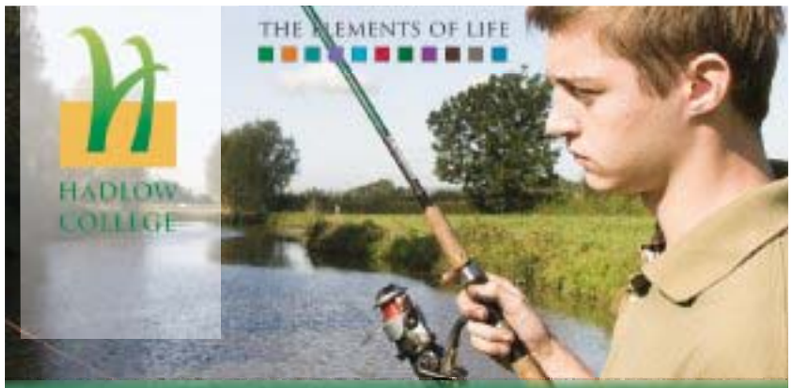
• Meet artist Mandy Munroe and see her textile wall pieces depicting buildings, at her studio in Smarden Bell Road, Smarden.

• Staplehurst has a tour of a Grand Designs eco-house. Architect Richard Hawkes will run tours of his pioneering, passive energy house which featured on the TV show.

• In Tonbridge there will be paintings and prints of Europe's buildings by Artist Nick Hebditch in his studio in Deakin Leas.

• Finally, in Whitstable there is a find the building contest and another Look Up, Look Around quiz by Khirstie Myles.

• ***The festival runs from May 20 to June 28, see www.festivalofarchitecture.org.***



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Sun 28th	Wembley Stadium Tour	£33.00	£26.00
Tues 30th	Kingston Upon Thames	£24.00	£18.00

JULY		ADULT	CHILD
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Boyfriend's 'face like back of bus' jibe leaves Mel with plenty to smile about

WHEN Mel Bartopp's boyfriend told her she looked like the back of a bus and then ditched her, she had no idea just how accurate he would prove to be, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

Now she is the star of a new TV makeover series and a dazzling poster of her is now plastered all over a London bus.

Mel, from Sevenoaks, was livid when her partner made the cutting put down, so she signed up for the So Would You Dump Me Now? show on satellite station Wedding TV.

The hosts are Lizzie Cundy, wife of former Chelsea star Jason, along with make-up artist to the stars, Sue Moxley.

Mel, a former drug addict, said: "I wanted to gain more confidence after a boyfriend had been really nasty to me.

"He always put me down, said no-one else would ever want me and that I was useless. I was with him from a very young age, about 15 or 16, and so I was quite impressionable back then and started to believe him, even when he said I looked like the back of a bus.

"I feel like I have abused myself, especially my body, my teeth and my skin. I wanted to feel good and look good.

"The main things I didn't like were my skin, as I've got lots of wrinkles on my forehead, and my teeth. I smoke and so I wanted them brightened and now I'm going to try and stop smoking."

The programme follows the plight of women who have been dumped by their partners and then turns them into who they had always dreamed of being.

Then they get to confront their men and, of course, ask the question the show gets its name from.

Sadly for Mel, 27, her former beau is locked up in Pentonville, so he will have to catch it on the television.

Although Mel has no interest in rekindling the flame with her ex, she would like him to see what he is missing out on.

Smoking left her with nicotine-stained teeth and lack-lustre skin didn't help, so she was taken to Harley Street, where Dr Amer Khan took care of the teeth. Then hairdresser Trevor Sorbie transformed Mel's lank locks.

As a recovering addict, Mel has always wanted to warn others of the dangers and so gave a talk at a primary school about her experience with drugs.

Experience

She said: "Although I was really nervous to talk to the children about my drug addiction, I was also really looking forward to it. I kept thinking to myself, did I take drugs because of my ex, or because of me? My ex was bad, he was a bit of a criminal, but he wasn't always like that.

"I also wanted to tell them that I've been clean for two years now and that I feel amazing. I wanted to get the children to understand that when you are addicted to drugs life becomes a blur and you don't care about anyone. When you get off the drugs all of your emotions come back; you realise how much pain you have put your family through and that you have wasted so much time."

Then it was on to a party to rub shoulders with Strictly Come Dancing's Brendan Cole, ex-Blue boy band member Simon Webb and former footballer Lee Sharpe, before hitting Canary Wharf to stop men in the street to ask if they would date or dump Mel. All said "date".

Looking back on the whole experience, she said: "I've got myself out of the destructive relationship I was in and I am moving forward with my life.

"My ex dumped me eventually and although I definitely wouldn't want to get back with him I would have loved him to see my makeover. It's nice to know that there is hope with other men after my boyfriend treated me like dirt."

Mel now wants to become a model and TV presenter and may look into a career in drugs counselling in her spare time.

JUST MADE UP: Mel appeared on the TV show So Would You Dump Me Now? after the hosts Lizzie Cundy and Sue Boxley (pictured left) transformed the 27-year-old with a dramatic makeover which included teeth whitening and work to her wrinkled head

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Concrete evidence

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

A PIECE of Medway's industrial past has been discovered at a former chalk quarry.

The early 20th century cement wagon, which had been buried in the undergrowth for nearly 100 years, has now been restored.

Rick Bayne, project manager at the Valley of Visions Landscape Partnership Scheme, which led restoration works on the wagon, explained how the wagon was discovered during survey works at the disused Hilton Pit quarry near Halling, Rochester.

He said: "The wagon we restored was one of three found in the side of the valley. It was found during survey work for the new Medway cement works.

"They were in a very bad condition. All that remained were the steel wheels and axles. They just looked like a set of wheels and rubble.

"Some of the chalk was sitting in the main part and it looked like it had just been abandoned as they were working."

One wagon was restored using the salvageable material from the other carts by specialists in Folkestone, Mr Bayne said.

Hundreds of similar wagons and earlier horse-drawn examples were used in the quarries that served the cement industry along the banks of the Medway and Thames in Kent.

The Kent Works at Greenhithe closed in 1970. Local historian Chris Down, who works for the owner of the site, cement giant Lafarge, said: "The wagons are believed to have been built locally, probably by cement works staff, using traditional carpentry and blacksmithing methods with some cast-iron components."

ON A ROLL: Rick Bayne, left, and David Simms of Lafarge, with the wagon restored to its former glory

BACK IN THE DAY: Wagons being loaded with chalk for cement

After a year of restoration work the wagon has now gone on display at Larfarge's offices at Holborough, near Snodland. The Hilton Pit where the wagons worked was named after its owners Hilton, Anderson & Co.

A lime works opened in 1873 at the site and the cement works in 1878.

Mr Down said the village of Lower Halling once had two cement works, Lee's Works to the south and Hilton to the north. Between them they would have been responsible for much of the growth of the village in the 19th century. The Hilton closed in 1927.

Although the old cement works site has been redeveloped, traces of its railway siding to the main line and its giant chalk pits can still be seen today.

Mr Bayne explained how the wagon functioned: "The wagon is off-set because it was designed to tip over in such a way that it could be easily lifted to tip out the chalk and remove it from the valley side at the site of the cement works on the river. Several wagons would have been connected and pulled along by an engine.

"The wagons were pulled a mile or so from the quarry down to the cement works and would have carried tonnes of chalk."

In 1900, the works became part of Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers and the old quarry is still owned by the company's successor, Lafarge, which is planning to open a new cement works at the quarry.

Valley of Visions is a three-year project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, which aims to encourage local people and visitors to conserve, enhance and celebrate the natural beauty and heritage of the Medway Gap.

Mum-to-be admits cocaine smuggling

A PREGNANT teenager has admitted attempting to smuggle cocaine into the UK.

Katherine Lennard, 19, from Gillingham, was stopped at Heathrow airport last Sunday after flying in from Costa Rica via Spain. Officers discovered 2kg of the class A drug, worth £80,000, in her luggage.

Lennard entered a guilty plea and was remanded in custody when she appeared before Uxbridge magistrates on Tuesday.

She will be sentenced on June 25.

Let's go for gold

A WEBSITE advertising Maidstone's Olympic hopefuls to business sponsors has been launched. The www.maidstonesdream.co.uk site is funded by Maidstone council and supported by our sister paper, Yourmaidstone.

The site profiles the county town's top athletes and businesses can choose who they would like to sponsor for the 2012 Olympics. Call Karen Jeal on 01622 602759 or email maidstonesdream@maidstone.gov.uk for more details.

Tot bitten by dog

A GIRL aged four needed specialist treatment after she was bitten on the cheek by a dog.

The youngster was taken to the Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead, which specialises in reconstructive surgery, after the incident last Friday afternoon at Calverley Grounds, Tunbridge Wells.

Police want to trace the owner of the dog. He is described as thin, white and about 5ft 8in. He was wearing khaki trousers, a sand-coloured bomber jacket, desert boots and a pork pie hat. The dog was small and scruffy.

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Vineyard's ambition grows on back of 'world cup' win

A KENTISH vineyard has achieved a major success at what is regarded as the world cup of wines, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

The International Wine Challenge is the world's largest and most prestigious wine competition.

And Chapel Down, based in Tenterden, took two silver medals for a pair of sparkling wines in the blind tasting competition – the Rose Brut, and Pinot Reserve 2004.

The competition, which is judged by wine experts such as Oz Clarke, was a triumph for English wines on the whole, with Brits taking a haul of 24 medals, the UK's best-ever showing.

Chapel Down said its wines had now won a number of global quality awards against both old and new world wine producers.

It said its wines are selling well in Hong Kong, Japan, the USA and Scandinavia and a growing reputation means demand is now outstripping supply by about six to one.

Guy Tresnan, sales and marketing director, said: "The great result at this year's competition shows our wine really can compete with the best of them. Our ambition is to become renowned all over the world for the quality of our wines.

"To be recognised at such a prestigious, worldwide competition means we are one step closer to achieving this goal."

A record 41 countries entered the competition and France topped the medal board overall with 729, while Australia achieved 591 and Italy came third with 405.

Chapel Down is the country's largest producer of English wines and has 25 acres at its base, plus it is able to source grapes from a further 180 acres in the South East.

It produces half-a-million bottles of wine a year and was recently awarded Best Product in Kent at the Taste of Kent Awards 2008.

For more information on Chapel Down, visit www.englishwinesgroup.co.uk.

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Pest control

Thanet Earth, the UK's largest greenhouse development, has gone back to nature in a bid to keep its crops safe from hungry insects

By **CHRIS MURPHY**

KEEPING bugs away from fruit and vegetables can be a nightmare – but while pesticides can do the job, places like Thanet Earth are at the forefront of new low-tech solutions – like using different bugs to kill the leaf munchers.

While some may think this is an ideal storyline for a new horror or sci-fi movie, the scientists inside the vast greenhouses at Thanet Earth are hard at work making it a reality.

Some liked the idea of using ladybirds to sort out the pests, but it turned out they are simply too lazy to get the job done.

Whitefly can wreak havoc on tomato plants, for instance. So Macrolophus is used for control of the whitefly in the tomatoes, but is also used in peppers to help against caterpillars.

And Aphidius can be used for aphid control in peppers and cucumbers, while phytoseiulus can tackle spider mites on all three crops.

The orius will take on thrips and also help protect peppers.

And a swirskii is used to save peppers and cucumbers from thrips and can help see off whitefly on cucumbers.

Rob James, technical manager at Thanet Earth, said: "Pests will always be a problem with plants. Any gardener will tell you about the damage insects can do.

"That's why there's a thriving pesticide industry, willing to sell us chemical solutions to the problem. But not everyone wants to use chemicals and if given a choice, consumers will opt for less pesticide on their food, every day of the week."

Modern agricultural techniques are surprisingly sophisticated now, and the Thanet Earth development, near Birchington, is no exception.

Predator

Inside the enormous greenhouses they grow tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers destined for the shelves of the country's supermarkets. And they're doing it almost entirely without pesticides.

New EU rules have outlawed some chemicals which could be harmful to humans, even in small doses, so more producers are turning to natural solutions to be rid of pets like whitefly, greenfly and mealy bugs.

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Heaven can wait – mine's a Spitfire

THE Pope's favourite tipple is the Kentish ale Spitfire, according to celebrity priest Father Michael Seed.

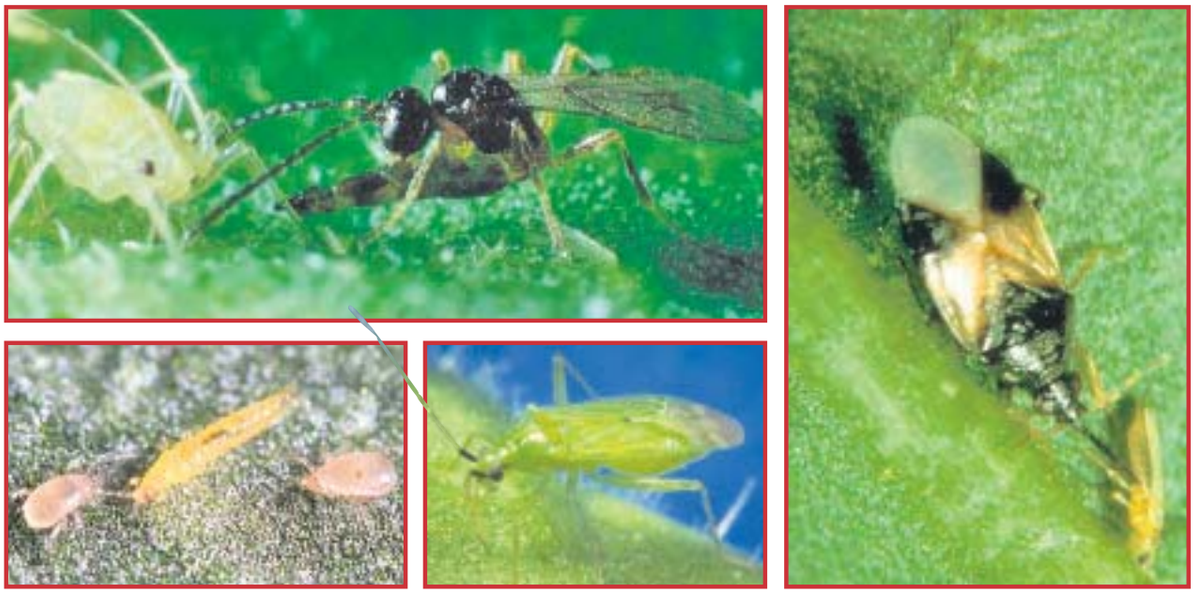
A gossip column in a national newspaper has reported the British cleric regularly sends English beer mats over to the Vatican as Easter or Christmas gifts for His Holiness.

The report claimed that German-born Pope Benedict XVI has a "fondness" for Spitfire, which is brewed at Faversham by Shepherd Neame.

Spitfire brand manager Charlie Holland added: "The Pope is not the first German to down a Spitfire, but certainly the most famous.

"We are delighted that His Holiness enjoys the unique taste of Spitfire, and we would encourage him to sample another of our fine Kentish ales – and try a Bishops Finger."

gets a little helping hand



NATURAL BORN KILLERS: (Clockwise) Ladybird, Aphidius colemani, an adult Orius, Macrolophus and Amblyseius swirskii attacking thrips

The new system is called integrated pest management, or IPM, although keen gardeners have long known about it.

Mr James said inside these greenhouses lurk predators looking for a meal.

"No, it's not a scene from a sci-fi film, it's what's known as 'biological control'. We use good insects to munch on the bad insects, thereby protecting crops without spraying them.

"Depending on the pest – typically whitefly for tomatoes, aphids for peppers and thrips for cucumbers – there's the perfect predator insect."

And the methods used sound as if they have come from the pages of a horror story.

He said: "Thanet Earth uses little cards on which you'll find hundreds of tiny eggs.

"These cards hang on the plants, the eggs hatch and release the predators into the greenhouse to hunt for their food.

"Alternatively, live predators are supplied in bottles and released. Some predators are used routinely as preventative measures for very common expected pests. Others are used curatively and introduced specifically to cure a problem. These pest populations are of massive importance and are heavily relied upon by the growers.

"In some cases, such as the spider mite pest on pepper plants, they actually introduce the pest as well as the predator before they plant a new crop to make sure the predator numbers are healthy and working as they should.

"Hanging baskets of barley can be seen in the pepper greenhouse too. These aren't for decoration – they hold populations of grain aphids which feed the aphelinus abdominalis predator to keep a healthy population ready to deal with any aphid infestation that occurs."

Balance

The growers really look after their predators too. In the tomato greenhouse, when they prune off the leaves they leave the cuttings on the floor for a while to allow any predators to jump off and find their way back to the plants.

As with all things natural, there are inevitably occasional times when the balance might need a bit of extra help and a control spray is needed.

The growers are careful to spot spray on particular areas only – not to spray the whole crop otherwise they'll kill the 'good' insects too, Mr James said.

He added: "These predators are also available for domestic settings, so if you fancy trying something different instead of spraying your tomatoes this year, then there are plenty of suppliers to help."

Richard Hammonds

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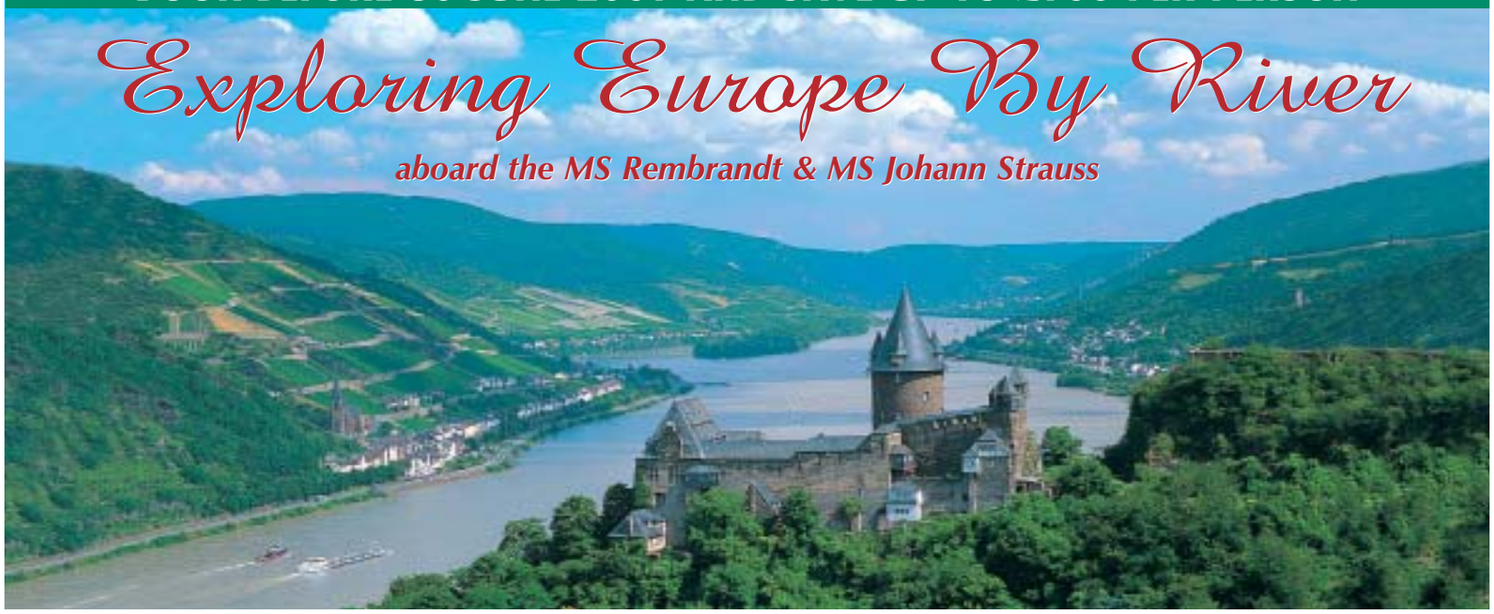

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KOS Campaign 2009

In association with PRODUCED IN KENT

BUY LOCAL PRODUCE ONLINE

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CHRIS BRITCHER
CAMPAIGN EDITOR
chris.britcher@kosmedia.co.uk

Neill Barston bites into the juicy crop of fruit ready to be harvested from our county's fields

'Tis the season to pick your own fruits and salads, beets and treats

FROM succulent strawberries to beetroot and asparagus, the Garden of England is set to reap plenty of rewards this summer for the pick-your-own season.

With a predicted spell of warm weather, there is renewed optimism from Kent growers who are anticipating strong crops and interest from a younger generation of customers.

Amid a wealth of TV gardening programmes and shows promoting healthier lifestyles, a greater number of people are embracing the five-a-day recommended dose of fruit and vegetables.

It all ties in perfectly with our 2009 campaign urging our readers to help protect the local economy by buying locally produced and supplied food and drink – spearheaded by our website www.foodforkent.co.uk, which unites the best producers under one online roof.

As a perennial favourite, demand for Kentish strawberries is particularly high. Martin Clews, of Stonepitts farm at Seal Chart, near Sevenoaks, is expecting a strong response to the company's latest crop available next month.

"Things are looking pretty good for this year. We took over the business 17 years ago and it's coming up to the 50th anniversary of the company now," he said. He added that despite a poor summer last year, the firm's long-established reputation had ensured its survival.

Despite its success with several strawberry varieties, Mr Clews explained the pick-your-own business has in recent years been suffering a decline since its peak in the 1980s. He believed this was largely due to a combination of poor summer weather and supermarket competition producing fruit all-year round.

"It's a shame we are the only people producing pick-your-own strawberries in this area, there used to be three or four others in this part of Kent when we first started out. We have had to move with the times and really ask people what strawberries they prefer, with the Old Cambridge being a real favourite – it goes back to the 60s and has a real old Englishness about it.

Picture: Joe Cicak

"This year we got in touch with more than 50 schools and my wife Jackie gave a lecture about how strawberries grow, and seeing the farm is a good way for them to learn."

Susie Mills, of Valley Arch pick-your-own near Dartford was also enthused by the prospects for the new season. She explained they were anticipating a strong demand for its strawberry-growing run: "We are finding a lot of younger people are coming to do pick-your own these days, which is a good thing as it used to be mainly a more mature market. It's a nice thing for a family to do and there's nothing like having some local strawberries in the summer.

"As with all the produce we grow, it's much better than fruit and veg that has been frozen, where you lose a lot of the vitamins in the process."

Farm shops in the county have also reported significant interest in a wide range of locally grown summer crops.

Paula Everett of Macknade farm shop in Faversham said summer fruit and veg had been proving extremely popular. Sales of asparagus and strawberries (maturing early due to being grown in poly-tunnels) were also doing well.

The Kent firm's enthusiasm was also shared by the National Farmers' Retail & Markets Association (FARMA).

It expected the UK to follow the American pick-your-own trend in being on course for a strong resurgence as customers find it an excellent way to get quality produce at the best prices.

PYO farms in America reported significantly increased business in 2008 – the first growth since the 1980s.

In another parallel with that decade, sales of domestic freezers also grew last year, fuelled partly because more people wanted to store their harvest from pick-your-own fields, and from their gardens and allotments.

"The time seems to be right for pick-your-own, reflecting the fact that people are prepared to 'do-it-themselves' to get quality and value," said Gareth Jones from FARMA. He explained that FARMA members report they plan to hold prices at last year's levels and were competitive with prices of supermarkets.

He added: "Great value for money is just one of the advantages of picking your own fruit and vegetables. The only other way to get such fresh and flavoursome produce is to grow it yourself."

A pedal-powered delivery

RECOGNISING how quickly the new season's asparagus is flying off the shelves, the manager of one hotel decided this week to go the extra mile to meet demand.

On Tuesday, David Sharma of Chartham Hatch's Howfield Manor Hotel, ensured next to no carbon footprint for the hotel's asparagus supplies.

Mr Sharma collected the asparagus grown in nearby Blean from the Goods Shed market in Canterbury before taking it back to Howfield Manor Hotel to be used in the restaurant, and he took the journey under pedal power on a bicycle.

It came about after Mr Sharma, who cycles to Howfield from Canterbury, found out the local supplier Charles Atkins delivers to the Goods Shed, but would be unable to deliver to the hotel. Keen to keep food miles down, and to avoid another delivery journey, Mr Sharma decided to pick up his order of asparagus every week of the season by bike.

Howfield Manor Hotel has recently submitted an application to join Produced in Kent – the organisation set up to promote local producers and suppliers – to demonstrate its commitment to using local produce and supporting its producers.

• For the latest offers of local asparagus see www.foodforkent.co.uk.

It's so easy to buy local

WANT to cut down on food miles which see both harm to the environment and a decline in the flavours of your food?

And, crucially, do you want to help support the economy and traditions of the Garden of England?

Then visit www.foodforkent.co.uk. We have teamed up with the finest producers and suppliers from across the county to offer a wide range of food and drink – and everything, wherever possible, comes from our county.

You can snap up your meat, your bread, your eggs and your veg all in one place. And everything is assured of being the very highest quality.

Simply go online to www. foodforkent.co.uk.

Sowing a seed of interest

MORE than 170 million free seeds are being given away by the National Trust as part of its new campaign to inspire people to grow their own food.

Aimed at inspiring families, the series of events titled Food Glorious Food are at Chartwell and Ightham Mote this half-term and will get everyone thinking about fresh produce.

The seeds are easy-grow pumpkins for those with a garden and salad rocket or baby lettuce for those with less space. See www.foodgloriousfood.org.uk for details and more tips to get your family growing.

foodforkent.co.uk We are committed to adding more local suppliers to our online service and any local business or producer that wishes to join our campaign should contact us at foodforkent.co.uk or email us at feedback@kosmedia.co.uk

KENT ON SUNDAY

COMMENT

Gurkha's transplant wait a total disgrace

GURKHA Kebahang Chemjong's fight for a kidney transplant heaps yet more shame on a Government that fails to understand what "doing the right thing" means.

Regardless of his birthplace, this brave Nepalese veteran was prepared to die on the battlefield defending the United Kingdom and that makes him a patient who should have been treated with the utmost urgency.

Instead he was left on dialysis for months while Government officials debated whether or not his sister and potential donor was lying about her identity, all the while causing further worry for his loving wife and children who were forced to watch his physical decline.

While it is right checks are made before foreigners are granted visas, the Home Office should have made this case a top priority.

The SSAFA Forces Help charity fought his corner admirably, but it should not have needed to have been involved at all.

What motivation is there for Gurkhas to help defend our country when the Government appears to be so ungrateful for their service?

Waste of a few bob

BOB Marshall-Andrews is one of many MPs who this week have been forced to explain their expense claims.

While the Medway MP claims he is saving the taxpayer money by using his Rochester flat as his constituency, did he really need to buy expensive Kenyan rugs and sound systems?

Just because his claims were "in the spirit of the system", does not make them morally correct.

OPINION: Time to retire Old Sparky

State executions no longer have place in the civilised world, reasons Tim Garbutt

RECENTLY I've been thinking about the death penalty. Two things brought it to mind.

One was Briton Samantha Orobator, arrested for heroin smuggling in Laos, south east Asia, and facing death by firing squad.

Plus, with the announcement last month of the abolition of the death penalty in New Mexico, USA, I got to wondering about Kent's American sister state, Virginia.

It still has the death penalty – though it's not used in the neighbouring state of West Virginia – and Virginia governor Tim Kaine has sanctioned five executions in the last year or so.

Unusually, when most executions in the United States are by lethal injection, Virginia retains the option of the electric chair. Maybe as a back-up.

The other reason the death penalty came up was from chatting to Amnesty International.

Here at Sincerity we're developing a monthly political prisoner campaign – initially with good old Belarus, Europe's last dictatorship – and the former presidential candidate Alyaksandr Kazulin.

Yet bizarrely, Amnesty doesn't have a list of political prisoners it is trying to free, or of UK nationals imprisoned abroad.

And it struck me, having experienced the vagaries of the judicial system over a trademark dispute, just how many people are innocent. American citizen Roxana Saberi was suddenly released in Iran after allegedly spying, while in the USA for every seven people executed, one is freed as innocent.

And 50 years after the last executions in Britain, only in 2003 was the death penalty for all civilian and military offences finally abolished.

The death sentence is proven to be barbaric – especially in the potential for mistakes.

Juries repeatedly refuse to convict people of serious crimes if there is a chance of the death penalty.

And it is abolished by the United Nations and new entrants to the EU. Society has moved on.

And now? Only five nations perform 90 per cent of the more than 5,000 death sentences carried out annually: China and the USA, and the Islamic nations of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Other nations have a sprinkling of death sentences that scarcely make sense either as a deterrent or a punishment (one execution in Belarus a year).

And even the USA – famous for death row and a series of high-profile executions – now executes about 40 people a year, in just 10 of the 50 states.

Virginia, though, has the second-highest rate since executions were reinstated in 1976. Today, there are 20 inmates on death row in Virginia.

In the 21st century the challenge must be to commute all death sentences to life; to remove the death penalty except for crimes of treason in wartime; and to create an Islamic justice system with an alternative to the death sentence.

The days of the hangman, firing squad and lethal injection are largely over. Only the anomalies remain.

Some of the statistics jumped out at me. Japan, one of the most civilised and developed nations on Earth, carried out nine death sentences in 2007.

While Singapore executes only two citizens, that makes the tiny city-state the place you're most likely to be executed.

And Vietnam has one of the highest death tolls – 25 executions each year.

Surely with the EU making the abolition of the death penalty a condition of membership, the same must apply to the African Union and Association of South East Asian Nations?

And in Kent, maybe we should ask county council leader Cllr Paul Carter to ask Governor Kaine of Virginia to go a little easier with the lethal injections and Old Sparky.

• ***Tim Garbutt is managing director of Sincerity Agency, the leading green and ethical advertising agency in Kent.***

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Downturn only partly to blame for housing woes

Regarding your very interesting front page story last weekend (Homes plan blocked by downturn, Kent on Sunday, May 10).

Plainly the downturn in the economy in general and construction industry in particular is partly responsible for house-building targets not being met, but this is not by any means the sole reason.

My own view, and that of many in the industry, is that even without the present downturn, these targets would never be met because of failures in the planning system to bring forward sufficient land.

More and more our local planning system centres on the broad brush approach of central government thinking and fails to take account of the needs and desires of the local communities they are supposed to serve. In order for us to even be able to approach the targets that have been set, planning authorities need to act in a more positive way to proposals for new housing, rather than making a presumption to refuse, unless they have overwhelming reasons not to do so.

Roland Nash, Littlestone

What about the poor?

It was not good to read your report about the slowdown in the building of new homes in the county (Kent on Sunday, May 10).

Nor was it good news to hear the county council is calling for lower house-building figures and KCC leader Cllr Paul Carter's reported view that there was a "very slight chance of meeting targets over the new few years".

To read as well that the CPRE gave a "sigh of relief" over the frustration of the development lobby was not welcome either.

Perhaps none of them had noticed that in April 2008 there were 38,408 households on the housing register in Kent and that was a 6.5 per cent increase on the previous year – and the numbers are still growing.

KCC's research office reports that unemployment in Kent has risen 4.6 per cent to 34,192 as of March, 2009; many of the unemployed are building and construction workers who are just the people needed to build the urgently needed affordable homes which the South East regional plan describes the lack of as being "a major barrier to continued economic growth" and causes other problems such as longer distance commuting.

Unemployment impinges most harshly on the lower-paid, but all of us must strive to alleviate and eliminate it.

District councils have been given new powers and finance to bring forward schemes for affordable and social housing and the upcoming county elections are just the time to see which of our aspiring councillors can help the districts to do what it takes to help solve growing unemployment and the shortage of homes for working people.

Leslie Turner, Maidstone

MoD making a killing

I agree with the views expressed in last week's story headlined 'Missing in action'. It is ridiculous that Gurkhas are not available in the range of toys produced by the MoD.

Of course the range could also be expanded to include soldiers without legs or who are psychologically traumatised. How about a bombed Afghan village range, complete with dead civilians? Why not go the whole hog and have the morally barren politician range, complete with a scale model of the International Criminal Court in The Hague?

Not content with dragging this generation kicking and screaming into their illegal wars, they want to brainwash our children into becoming cannon fodder for the next ones.

Our wars in the Middle East are ones of shame and sadness; wars that reveal how hollow we have become; wars that reflect an insatiable appetite for conquest, killing and self-delusion. Yet we still think we are the good guys.

Alan Haynes, Chatham

Your money or your life

It is time something was done about this money-grabbing Dartford crossing. We keep hearing how great our country is doing tackling pollution, keeping things green and saving the planet, when it is all about money.

Saving the planet and people's lives come last when it comes to Dartford.

I travel frequently by road and the worst hold-ups are always at Dartford. It takes me 15 minutes to get to the crossing and 15 minutes to get through. And it's easy to see there is a pollution problem – just put your head out of the window. Last week, for the first time ever at Dartford, I got across with no problem.

No stopping and no jams. What was different? It was 10.30pm and toll-free.

If the crossing was free it would keep traffic moving, help the environment and give local people more of a chance for a healthy life.

Roy Knights, Securicare CCTV

Gone with the wind?

Gillingham and Rainham MP Paul Clark, has been quoted as saying he votes for what he believes in and that his opinions do not change with the wind.

Well, they may not change but they certainly conflict. Readers may find this hard to believe, but here is a man who voted uniquivocally in favour of the Iraq war, then against any investigation into it, but was happy to vote against the interests of soldiers his vote sent to fight there.

In my experience, the Gurkhas are invariably in or around the frontline in most conflicts we are engaged in, but if he voted as his conscience guided him, so be it.

I hope the electorate remember this at the next general election. To the best of my knowledge, Mr Clark has rarely, if ever, abstained or voted against the Government in his parliamentary career, so it seems his beliefs would be better thought of as blinkered rather than considered.

Michael Smith, Medway

Reasons to be fearful

We are all living in fear of swine flu. So far 53 people have died in Mexico. Yet more people than that die from smoking-related diseases in London every day.

David Burgess, Hawkhurst

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YOUR LETTERS

KOS Media welcomes your comments and letters for publication. Please send correspondence to: Letters to the Editor, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. Alternatively fax them to: 01303 817002, or email them to editorial@kosmedia.co.uk. Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances. Please also include a daytime telephone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit letters.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

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For advertising announcement enquiries telephone Kent on Sunday on 01303 817150

BIRTHS

CHAPMAN
Lee and Kirsty are delighted to celebrate the birth of their precious daughter, Sophie Louise. Sophie was born on 29th April 2009 and weighed 4lb 9oz.

COBBOLD
Robert and Phoebe of Shepherdswell are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter, Mae Rose , on 3rd May 2009. A new sister for Grace, Mary, Susie, Sam and George.

CROOKS
Stuart and Ann-Marie proudly announce the birth of Kimberly Anna Louise on 01/05/2009 at The Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital Margate, a sister for Joe.

FLOWER
Simon and Kelly are delighted to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter Clara Rose, a sister for Charlotte. Clara was born on 27th April 2009 at Pembury Hospital and weighed 7lbs.

HEAD
Otis born on 15th April 2009, weighing 7lbs 1oz. Son to Tamara Rattigan and Calvin Head in Margate.

HODGKINS
Ruby Evelyn born on 7th May 2009, weighing 6lbs 14oz. Daughter to Gavin and Alyssa in Minster. Little sister to Oliver.

HOUGHAM
Lorraine of Canterbury is very proud to announce the birth of her beautiful daughter, Mollie Samantha Angel Kate Hougham on 28th April 2009. A new sister for Tom. David and Ellie.

IZZARD
Bruce and Emma are proud to announce the birth of Luke Anthony Izzard on 6th May 2009 at Pembury hospital. A baby brother for Isabelle.

JONES
Christopher Aaron Thomas Ellis born on 30th April 2009, weighing 7lbs 3oz. Son to Sharon and Steven in Ramsgate.Little brother to Charlotte and Shannon.

KILLEEN
David and Joanne of Canterbury are delighted to anounce the safe arrival of their son, Samuel David, on 22nd March 2009 weighing 6lb 13oz. A new brother for Elliott and Toby.

KIRKHAM
Gary and Mandy Kirkham celebrate the birth of their son Jake John on 3rd May 2009. Mummy and Daddys beautiful and precious son.

LEE
Michelle and Daniel Lee of Folkestone celebrate the birth of their daughter Isabelle Grace on the 5th May 2009.

MARRINER
Judith and Richard celebrate the birth of their son Oliver Jude Phoenix Marriner on 17th March 2009. A baby brother for Isaac.

MARTIN
Roy and Natasha Martin announce the birth of their beautiful daughter Alexa -Rose Tamsin born 26th April 2009 at Darent Valley Hospital weighing 8lb 4oz .

PORTER
Amanda and Nigel of Bossingham are delighted to announce the birth of their son, Oliver James William, on 8th April 2009 weighing 7lb 5oz. A new brother for Isabelle.

RISDON
Jessica May Ruby was born on 1st May 2009 at Maidstone Hospital, weighing 9lb. She is a beautiful daughter to Ian and Karen and a sister to Liam.

SELLWOOD-ADAMS
Anita and Will celebrate the birth of their son Archie Keith George Sellwood - Adams, born 5th May 2009 weighing 8lbs.

SEWELL
Tegan Sewell born on 28th April 2009 weighing 6lbs 10ozs. Daughter to Lara Holmes and Reece Sewell.

SHARMA
Neelam and Inder Mohan Sharma celebrate the birth of their daughter Divyanka Sharma on 23rd April 2009.

STRAUGHN
Saffron Elena born on the 5th May 2009, weighing 9lbs 3.5ozs. Daughter to Leeroy and Lisa Straughn of Ashford. Sister to Mekhi.

WALKER
Louisa born on the 25th April 2009, weighing 6lbs 6ozs. Daughter to Vicki and James of Alkham.

WARTON
Ben Warton and Naomi Jones are pleased to announce the arrival of Abigail Sarah Genevieve Warton. Born on 20th April 2009 weighing 7lb 2½ oz, a little sister to Daniel Judgement Warton

WILLIAMS
Theo Haines, born at home in Birchington on 4th May 2009, weighing 8lb 2oz. Son to Jonathan and Marnie, brother to Tahlia.

DEATHS

EVERETT
Amy Everett of Cliftonville formerly South Harrow, Middx passed away suddenly on 7th May 2009. Funeral at Margate Crematorium 2:00pm Wednesday 20th May. Flowers to Gore Brothers Thanet Road.

GLASS
Muriel Jane Glass of Dover passed away suddenly after a long illness on 9th May 2009. A much loved mum, mother-in-law, grandmother and great grandmother who will be very sadly missed by all the family. A private funeral will be held at Barham on 20th May 2009.

JEAVONS
Annie (Nan) Jeavons passed away peacefully at Darent Valley Hospital on 4th May 2009 aged 94. Funeral service at Eltham Crematorium on 26th May at 2.45 pm.

JOHN MILLER (JACK)
Passed away peacefully at QEQM Hospital on 11/05/2009 aged 86. A wonderful husband to Lucy and Father to John, Wendy, sandra and Peter. Greatly missed by family and friends. The cremation will take place at Thanet Crematorium on Tuesday 15th May at 3:20pm. Family flowers only please but donations to Pilgrims Hospice, c/o H R Palmer Funeral Directors Ramsgate.

LEAN
Elaine Lilian Lean died peacefully on 7th May 2009. Wife of John, much loved Mother of David and Karen and loving Grandmother of Jordan, Callum, Hayden and Louanna.

MEPHAM
Edith Gertrude Mepham of Herne Bay, formerly of Teynham, passed away suddenly after a long illness on 6th May 2009 aged 87 years. A much loved mum, mum-in-law, nan and great nan who will deeply missed. The funeral will be held on 20th May at 3.30pm at Vinters Park, Maidstone. Family flowers only but if desired donations to Alzheimers Society c/o Woollard and Kent, Tankerton.

PACK
Iris Alice Ada Pack of Canterbury passed away after a long illness, bravely fought, on 2nd May 2009. A much loved wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother who will be very sadly missed.

SARGENT
Joan Sargent died peacefully on 29th April 2009. Funeral service at Boxley Church at 10:15 on Tuesday 19th May, followed by cremation at Vinters Park Crematorium at 11:00.

SENIOR
Stanley Senior died peacefully on 4th May 2009. Funeral service at Vinters Park Crematorium on 14th May 2009.

Letters continued from page 37

Damaging democracy

I am disgusted, appalled and in despair at the scandal surrounding MPs' expenses.

The basic salary for a member of Parliament is three to four times that of the average wage in Britain, and is perfectly adequate for anyone to live on comfortably without claiming excessive and immoral expenses. It is right that people feel hurt.

It is right that they feel angry and they can't be blamed for thinking that all politicians are the same and that there are none worth voting for.

These allegations are causing great damage to our democracy and I do hope all MPs, regardless of political party, will publish their expenses, will apologise publicly for any wrongdoing and will reimburse the taxpayer.

Julie Rook, Deal

Payback in the courts

The starting point before any money is paid back by MPs must surely be a police investigation into who misappropriated what and for how long.

The excuse they were just abiding by the rules does not hold up. That is the perennial response of the coward and the guilty.

Fiddling of expenses is not an overnight phenomenon, it's been going on for years and would have gone on longer were it not for the Freedom of Information Act and some courageous whistleblowing.

Indeed, Tory leader David Cameron has had three years in which to demand payback by his MPs but has only now chosen to act after the never-ending catalogue of abuses being exposed daily.

Abuses that in my book are so corrosive they cannot be swept aside into a parliamentary committee investigating its own miscreants, for to do so would undermine the very foundation stone of Parliament itself, Magna Carta, and the right of us all to be judged equal before the law, from peer to MP to pauper.

Damage limitation it may be, but Mr Cameron's edict to his honourable party members should not give them immunity from knocks on their doors from the police or interviews under caution.

Payback is one thing, but being brought to account must come first, whether it's fiddling expenses or Income Support. And if that means members of Parliament going on trial in our courts, so be it.

Donald Worsley, Aldington, Labour parliamentary candidate for Folkestone and Hythe

Disgust at party line

Watching the Government and other parties is like watching an accident in slow motion.

They don't even have the wit to sort out their own mess, let alone the mess they have created of the country over the years.

What could be simpler than to create a system of MPs' expenses that would be fair and resistant to fraud?

It makes you think they are much happier with a more elastic approach to accommodate their insatiable greed. I was going to say schoolchildren could do better, but with the constant tinkering and dumbing down of our schools, I couldn't be sure.

Like a conjurer whose art is misdirection, speaker Michael Martin now calls for a police inquiry into how the expenses information was leaked. Not, you notice, an inquiry into those who have broken the rules and taken our money.

These people disgust me. When caught, they trot out pathetic, transparent lies.

Labour apologists appear to repeat, parrot-fashion, that they can't talk about individual cases and it was all within the rules.

They can, it wasn't and although they are all in denial, we are not.

Phil Granger, West Malling

Don't trade in misery

Ever more animals are being bred for the pet trade, despite our sanctuaries being filled to capacity. Shelters all over the country are staggering under the weight of abandoned pets, often due to people buying an animal they discover they have neither the time nor energy to care for properly.

We now have the credit crunch to exacerbate the issue, with people losing their homes or jobs and unable to find funds for vet or feed bills. Shelters are filled to overflowing and desperate for caring people to take on a rescued animal.

So I was shocked to see a sign at a garden centre advertising puppies for sale. It was depressing to find a warehouse filled with many types of birds, reptiles of all sorts and 16 puppies. I was informed they would all be sold within a week.

As this is a business, their places will be taken by another 16 puppies, then another 16, from breeders who see these animals as a money-spinning product.

Human nature being what it is, many of these cute and adorable puppies will be bought on a whim and, unfortunately, quickly turn into an inconvenient nuisance and be dumped at the nearest sanctuary.

Think long and hard about whether you really want an animal and if you decide you do, go to a shelter.

In doing so, you don't contribute to the animal production industry which leaves so many others picking up the pieces.

Sara Starkey, Tonbridge

A flawed vision

The Government will be very flattered by Gerry O'Donnell's letter (KOS Media, May 10). He accuses them of devising the secondary school building programme as a fiendishly cunning way "to squeeze the grammar schools out of existence", while, as their dealings with the Gurkhas have shown, they have less cunning than a pound of lard.

Most of our secondary schools date from two building phases, one in the 1870s and one in the 1960s. Buildings from both phases are reaching the end of their lives simultaneously – a sad reflection on the '60s – and a crisis for education that is going to be horrendously expensive to remedy.

What has actually happened under this so-called 'grammar-school hating' Government is that the grammars have expanded and the proportion of children going to them has risen way above 25 per cent. KCC leader Cllr Paul Carter is on record regretting this expansion and committing himself to bringing the selection rate down, acknowledging the fact that the effect on the rest of Kent's schools has been devastating.

KCC education leader Cllr Mark Dance is on record saying he'd like to shut a grammar in Thanet (where there is a high proportion of children from poorer families who tend not to pass the 11-plus) and to reopen it in west Kent where there is a much higher proportion of middle-class children.

So Mr O'Donnell's vision of grammar schools catering for bright working-class children is just that, a vision with little foundation in reality. The same is true of his casual rubbishing of comprehensive schools. Most children outside Kent go to comprehensives and their achievements can be as good or better than Kent's but without the expense, stress and division that inevitably come with the 11-plus.

Martin Frey, STEP, Appledore

Small-minded Tories

Medway Council is proposing to close St Peter's, St John's, Ridge Meadow and St Nicholas schools as part of its Primary Strategy for Change. The council is run by the Tories, and the cabinet is all Conservative councillors. They will make the decision about the future of the four schools.

Last week, Cllr Wicks, the cabinet member responsible for closing schools, blamed the Government for the plan. However, the decision is entirely the responsibility of the Tory cabinet.

Cllr Wicks also blamed Labour for leaking the news about the closures. This is also nonsense. The council finalised the plan without discussing it with schools and then sent the plan to the Government. Only then did the council start telling the schools, but made them sign a confidentiality agreement. Parents found out and told the media. Meanwhile, the council held a press conference. The BBC told the Labour group it had the details. Only then did we agree to comment.

The Government is giving Medway £11 million as part of the Primary Strategy.

The money should be used to improve good schools, enhance parental choice, and to support communities. The proposed closures directly contradict these aims.

So why are schools under threat? The Conservatives claim the Government is forcing them to close schools because of surplus places. This is nonsense. The Government requires councils to look at schools with more that 25 per cent surplus places, but it does not require closure. In fact, the Government encourages investment in good schools to improve them and there are many other schools across Medway with surplus places which are not under threat. The birth rate is rising and the council's own projections show that by 2013 there will be a places shortfall of 116 in Rochester, 74 in Chatham, and 139 in Strood.

The real reason they want to close these schools is their size. Smaller schools cost more and Cllr Wicks has now admitted that the closure of four small schools will help with the budget. The Primary Strategy for Change is an opportunity to improve our schools and it is outrageous that the first step the Tories are taking is to close good schools. Cllr Wicks says he believes every child matters. Clearly in Medway some children matter more than others – and money matters most.

Cllr Bill Esterson, children's services spokesman, Labour group, Medway Council

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MONEY MATTERS

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Inside your pull-out supplement

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- Don't let debt get the better of you
- Is working from home a cheaper option?
- Get an index-linked return on savings
- EU speaks out for small business
- Reasons behind company paid assistance
- Only one way for mortgage rates to go
- Three points of survival
- Communication is key in a downturn
- What to do if you need to close down
- Splitting assests in a divorce court

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Good advice for difficult times

THE experts can't seem to agree – one day we are told the green shoots of recovery are peeping through, the next they are nowhere to be seen.

Whatever the truth, it's certainly going to be a while before we are all sleeping easy in our beds again and there are still plenty of choppy waters to deal with.

That's why this latest edition of Money Matters has plenty of good advice for consumers and businesses who are all looking to reduce their costs, save money and do some serious planning for the future.

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Follow Dad's Army to defeat the recession

MILITARY STYLE: Businesspeople are taking Corporal Jones' advice and refusing to panic, in fact many of them are hanging onto their 'luxuries' like Blackberries and company cars

By **TONY PATEY**

DON'T panic, Mr Mainwaring – one in every three South East small business bosses are evoking the Blitz-type attitude and keeping their chins up as the economic bombs rain down during the recession.

They're refusing to let the recession get them down, insisting it has had no impact on their personal lives, according to new research from independent financier Bibby Financial Services.

However, that does mean that two out of every three seem to have the opposite view …

Anyway, many business owners in the South East are adopting various ways of coping:

- 47 per cent are refusing to cut out what could be seen as luxuries, such as Blackberries or company cars, which they clearly see as essential
- 69 per cent are continuing with holiday plans or other time off
- 76 per cent are not getting any less sleep
- 71 per cent are not seeing any less of their family
- 82 per cent are maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- just 12 per cent are drinking more alcohol.

Andy Leopold, Bibby's spokesperson for the South East said: "Some might consider a Blackberry or company car a luxury, but for many small business owners in the South East today these are simply essentials which are helping with the day-to-day running of their business.

"Whereas previously business owners in the region may have been prepared to neglect their personal lives in order to sustain their business, these days they recognise the importance of trying to maintain some sort of work life balance, instead seeing time away from the business, such as holiday, as a tool to help them survive.

"However, while it's good to see business owners in the South East remaining positive, they also need to be prudent financially to get through the downturn and not completely throw caution to the wind.

"With 77 per cent of business owners in the region now scrutinising finances more carefully, it's clear cash flow remains king. Luckily there are still plenty of ways for the region's business owners to stay on top of cash-flow issues and ensure those close to them don't suffer in the process."

Indeed, all but 11 per cent of business owners in the South East polled say they have learned something new from the experience of this recession. Thirty three per cent have learned to keep a closer eye on cash flow, 26 per cent have learned to plan better for the future and 14 per cent say they have become more shrewd.

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Don't let debt recovery drag your business down

By **DAVID GREEN**

EVEN for companies currently managing to weather the economic storm there are still many challenges to face.

Not least is the fact that overdue bills or worse still, customer debts, are spiralling out of control.

Ultimately, debt recovery is becoming one huge headache and more businesses than ever are having to spend their time chasing debt.

Overdue bills can be a nightmare to manage, and if you're a smaller business whose survival is dependant on regular cash flow, the urgency of the situation is magnified.

A good cash flow is critical for companies to be able to pay their staff and suppliers; not to mention if they are to have any hope at all of generating income for the owners and shareholders of the business.

Taking the right steps from the outset will allow you to maximise getting the money rightly owed to you without damaging your business relationships.

The first step is to ensure your terms and conditions are clear regarding payment, and if you are going to use an external company to collect overdue payments, make your intentions clear to your customer so there can be no misunderstandings.

CHALLENGES: Take the right steps to maximise the chances of getting money owed to you

A solution needs to be put into action swiftly to give you every chance of getting your money back at the lowest cost to you.

Many businesses find it hard to chase a customer for the debts, particularly where the customer is another business, as there is a risk that attempts to recover debts will be seen as aggressive and relationships can sour.

Many companies lack confidence in making heavier demands for payment. Fears of losing future business coupled with emotional baggage can all to often interfere with this process.

But it is important not to lose sight of the fact the customer has failed to pay you the money they owe and you simply can't afford to jeopardise the financial stability of your own business or allow them to spiral into further debt.

These concerns can be avoided by a simple and effective recovery plan.

As the payment terms nea r their end, a 'friendly' phone call can, if necessary, be followed up in writing to instigate a gentle reminder of the outstanding payment due and to re-emphasise your payment terms.

What has to be avoided is continual phone calls and letters chasing a debt as this wastes your time and stops you from concentrating on new business.

Enlisting the help of a recovery agent or a professional solicitor at the early stages could be beneficial in terms of saving you time and money in the long term, and it takes away the hassle and emotional concerns which often materialise.

However, debt collection agencies will usually charge a percentage of the total debt, which means they are likely to cherry-pick those larger debts and cases that will bring them a good guaranteed return, and this can be a costly option.

In our view, the most efficient debt recovery model is to use a combination of all the various options, but don't be afraid to allow those representing you to take the action that is necessary to recover the debt.

Knowing the right path to choose with a debt and what action to take if, and when, a judgement is obtained is extremely important as many cases get to judgement and then are unable to be enforced.

Debt recovery is not an exact science, but experience is all important.

• ***David Green is spokesman for MTA Solicitors, which has an office in Bromley.***

Home is where the office is

By **JOHN GUTHRIE** and **DOUG SKILTON**

WITH the dole queue getting longer and recession-battling bosses seeking ways to cut costs, increasing numbers of people are starting to work from home.

As many as one in seven of the working population are now homeworkers.

The attractions of remote working are clear: the potential release from rental overheads and the freeing up of commuting time.

But there are practical and legal issues which must be balanced against the saving from office overheads before setting aside part of the home for business use.

We'd like to consider those who work totally from home as opposed to the occasional home worker. In many cases internal alterations will be carried out to the home to facilitate that remote working.

Planning permission is required whenever there is a material change in the planning use of a property. It is a matter of fact and degree in each case whether there has been such a change.

The key question for people intending to run a business from home is whether the overall character of the house will change from being a private home as a result of the business.

The most important factor to consider is the question of whether the business use is subservient to the residential use. The right to use land for a primary planning use includes the right to use it for a subservient or 'ancillary' use.

However, there is no hard-and-fast rule for deciding the point at which running a business from home will fall outside the scope of ancillary use.

Much will turn on the nature of the business use, but judicial guidance suggests that anyone using more than 10 per cent of their home for business use could be at risk of requiring separate planning permission

Planning permission may also be required for any physical alterations that are needed to make the property suitable for the business use.

Compliance with building regulations will also be needed if there are any changes to the home. As an example, a hairdresser who decides to run their business from home should remember that not only do structural changes in the property require Building Regulation Consent but also simpler measures such as the installation of a washbasin.

Business rates, as opposed to council tax, will apply to the part of the home used exclusively for business.

Remote workers should consider getting a separate phone line for their business to claim tax relief on business calls and also about reclaiming VAT on anything bought for business purposes.

A remote worker should always check both their deeds and mortgage conditions, or their rental agreement, to ensure that there are no restrictions against running a business from home.

If necessary they should apply for consent under the deeds and mortgage.

Rubbish (often overlooked) is another problem area and business waste should not be put in domestic refuse bins. Plastic business waste bags can be expensive.

From a practical viewpoint, will customers of the business visit the home and upset the neighbours? If it is necessary to have client meetings should they be at the client's premises instead?

Finally, remember to check that using your home for business will not invalidate your buildings insurance policy.

• John Guthrie is an associate and Doug Skilton is a solicitor at Tunbridge Wells based Thomson Snell & Passmore.

HOME OFFICE: There are practical and legal issues to working from home

Essential guide to where you can save

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Guaranteeing a return for your savings

Picture: PETER BYRNE/PA PHOTOS

SET: Putting your cash in National Savings & Investments certificates could be the answer

By **JEREMY GATES**

IF YOU believe our economy sits on a powder keg of inflation – and some fear its return might be the only salvation for Britain if Government plans to borrow £700 billion are carried through – there are sound arguments for savings which guarantee an index-linked return.

If they ponder Chancellor Alistair Darling's words carefully, savers might want an alternative to banks or building societies for part of their savings. In any case, the three per cent-plus fixed-rate returns, now on offer from these institutions over two or three years, could look mean if inflation takes off.

It was therefore not coincidental that National Savings & Investments (NS&I) offered two new issues of Inflation Beating Savings certificates last week. Also called Index-linked certificates, they enable savers to invest a maximum £15,000 per issue in three-year (19th issue) or five-year (46th issue) certificates.

Dax Harkins, NS&I senior savings strategist says they usually make a new issue of Index-linked certificates when they change the rate: "In this instance, the rate stays the same – Retail Prices Index (RPI) plus one per cent – if held for the full term, but investors wanted a new issue to allow them to put more money in."

Opportunity

As NS&I certificates are tax free, the equivalent rate is index-linking plus 1.25 per cent for basic rate taxpayers, and index-linking plus 1.67 per cent for higher rate taxpayers. On each anniversary, interest and index-linking are added to the certificate.

The last issue was in June, 2008, which effectively means NS&I offers an opportunity to salt away up to £15,000 per person per year, or £30,000 per couple, with returns free of income tax and capital gains tax (CGT), like ISAs.

Many savers value 100 per cent security for their cash. Index-linked Savings Certificates were launched by NS&I in 1975, and 600,000 investors hold £16bn in them against £39bn in Premium Bonds, which get more promotion.

With Premium Bond prizes falling to just one per cent, new £25 prizes have been introduced to ensure Bond holders win nearly one million prizes per month. With 39 billion Premium Bonds in circulation, the odds on any single bond winning are 36,000-1.

As Premium Bonds lose some appeal, the threat of inflation makes Index-linked certificates more attractive. If RPI goes negative they still guarantee the annual one per cent bonus on investments held to the end of their term. In fact, this is the first time a continuous period of deflation has been experienced since NS&I launched index-linked certificates.

With personal tax levels certain to rise after the next General Election, there is a strong case for using NS&I products to hold more savings outside the tax net. However, savers should remember Inflation Beating Savings pay no interest at all on withdrawals after one year, with returns thereafter weighted to favour those who remain for the full term.

"It won't have you jumping up and down with excitement, but this product already pays a better return than many instant access savings accounts, and returns could look good if inflation kicks in, maybe 18 months from now," Mark Dampier at Hargreaves Lansdown said.

Clearer

Kevin Mountford, Moneysupermarket.com, says NS&I products should be in any balanced savings portfolio: "With index-linking, you have the prospect of a fixed return, as opposed to accounts which are market-leading one moment and stragglers a few months later.

"Here there is the prospect of a definite return, over and above the cost of living."

Andrew Hagger, Moneynet.co.uk, says for savers purely concerned with inflation, it's a good home for your money. But he is not sure he would tie up money for that long at present: "Consider the West Bromwich BS E-Bond, paying 4.3 per cent before tax on a one-year bond (min £5,000), or perhaps ICICI Bank's Instant Access paying 2.45 per cent on a minimum £1, until the trend on rates becomes clearer."

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EU acts to help small companies

By **GÜNTER VERHEUGEN**
European Commission Vice President, responsible for enterprise and industry policy

IN THIS present economic crisis everybody speaks about job losses in the big industries and big companies.

Governments are keen to take action and to find ways to support them. But there is also another side of the coin: who cares about the millions of small enterprises which are struggling for survival? I do.

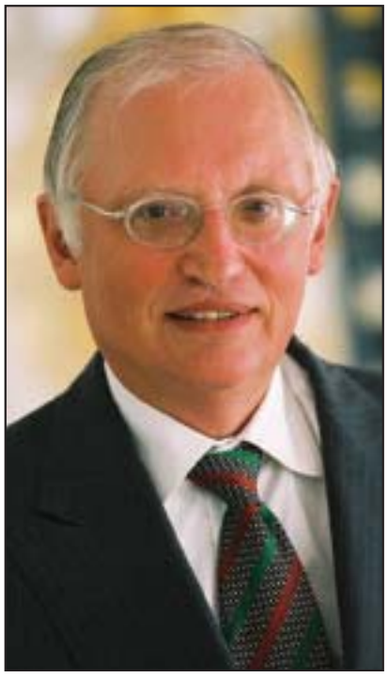
Because I know, without entrepreneurs there are no enterprises, without enterprises there are no jobs. And, therefore, I am convinced that in the crisis we must strengthen our efforts to give small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) the best possible framework-conditions.

Not being paid for the goods and services delivered is bad for a business in any circumstances, but becomes dramatic today as the economic crisis reduces alternative sources of finance and diminishes demand. The distance to bankruptcy can get dangerously short.

As government at all levels puts imagination to work looking for any useful measure to counter the crisis, they should not forget about the simplest – avoid the huge amount of invoices for the purchase of goods and services which they pay late after delivery.

That is why the Commission has decided it was time to upgrade EU rules on late payment in commercial transactions and proposed public authorities should as a rule pay their bills within a maximum of 30 days.

As an incentive to clear the bills in time the Commission suggests introducing a flat-rate compensation of five per cent cumulated with the late payment interest. In parallel, the European Commission commits itself to speed up its own payment for the purchase of goods and services.



SMALL THINGS: Günter Verheugen sees the value of enterpreneurs and small enterprises

The proposal on late payments is only the latest in a series of initiatives to help SMEs taken by this European Commission since it took office in 2004 and which culminated with the proposal of the Small Business Act (SBA) in June of last year. This has found the agreement of all member States and the European Parliament.

The SBA puts forward a complete policy framework to improve the overall approach to entrepreneurship and to promote SMEs' growth by helping them tackle the remaining problems which hamper their development.

The act applies to all companies which have fewer than 250 employees: 23 million across the EU.

Key to this new policy framework is the application of the Think Small First principle. Henceforth, all public authorities in the EU are called to ensure that SMEs' interests are always taken into account in policy making.

The Commission has revised state aid rules to encourage Member States to do more for SMEs since public funding for training, research and development, environmental protection and other types of aid is important for SMEs.

We have proposed a new statute for a European Private Company which will allow SMEs to start up and operate according to the same company law provisions throughout the European Union.

Finally, I am happy to add that the Member States agreed to open up the option to apply reduced Value Added Tax rates for locally supplied services, including labour intensive services, such as hairdressing, catering, and repair.

To encourage and inspire new entrepreneurs who are planning to set up a new business, we have also launched an Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs – a European exchange programme to help entrepreneurs acquire relevant skills for managing an SME by spending time working in another EU country with an experienced entrepreneur.

To free the hands of SMEs, we are cutting administrative burdens with full speed, eyeing the target to reduce administrative burdens on companies stemming from EU legislation by 25 per cent by 2012.

For example, in January the Commission adopted a proposal for a revision of the VAT Directive to remove the barriers to electronic invoicing. The yearly reduction potential could be as high as 18 billion euros in the mid-term.

Extra savings

In the case of company law, the Commission proposed to allow Member States to exclude micro-enterprises, with ten employees or less, from the scope of EU accounting directives, which could bring additional savings of seven billion Euros.

Moreover 24 Member States have given themselves a better regulation agenda.

Since access to finance is essential for SMEs, notably in times of crisis, the European Investment Bank devoted 30 billion euros to SMEs in Europe in the form of new loans granted via commercial banks. This scheme, approved at the end of 2008, is actively supported by the European Commission.

Now is the time, once and for all, to cement the needs of SMEs in EU policy. To get out of the current crisis we need to clear the path for those who want to create more jobs and are the key drivers of innovation, who will need to master the ship towards a low carbon economy.

To see this clip, search 'driving' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

Julie Maddocks looks at how changing your driving habits could have a big effect on your pocket at the petrol pump

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Firms are helping you out to help themselves

REPUTATION: Employers help staff move on because they feel it encourages others to stay with them

By **TONY PATEY**

THE truth always comes out – and when firms dip into their pockets to help staff being booted out the door through no fault of their own it's not because the companies are being nice and kind.

The real reasons, according to one of our biggest recruitment consultancies, are to maintain a good reputation, hold onto key employees – and help mangers to deliver the bad news.

It's euphemistically called outplacement, but it basically means easing unwanted or unneeded executives out of a company by providing company-paid assistance in finding them new jobs.

With short-term strategy firms cutting back on staff – as they always do come an economic downturn – more individuals are getting this type of support.

Now a study by Reed Consulting has revealed that aside from what it says is the moral obligation, there are many reasons why firms cough up to offer help.

A company spokesman: "In the event of a firm having to make redundancies, there is always the risk its reputation among potential employees and customers will be damaged.

"Three quarters of firms felt provision of outplacement could improve the organisation's reputation, while a half believed it could help make them be seen as an employer of choice."

Also, perversely, firms think it helps them retain staff. "Given its common proximity to redundancy programmes, respondents felt the provision of outplacement support helped the employer retain and motivate those staff not directly affected.

"It is a commonly held view that up to 25 per cent of top performers leave an organisation within 90 days of a major change announcement being made. Two-thirds of respondents agreed that offering outplacement support for staff being made redundant helped retain those who remained."

The study also found that more than 70 per cent of employers believe offering outplacement helps line managers implement redundancies "with a clearer conscience" and 87 per cent of those interviewed felt it eased the pressure on them.

Now we know.

Are mortgage rates about to start going up?

By **JEREMY GATES**

EIGHT weeks after the base rate hit a mind-boggling 0.5 per cent, last week's decision by the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to leave rates unchanged hardens the consensus that mortgage rates go one way from here – up.

On the way down, tracker loans were a smart move for borrowers, shrinking monthly repayments close to zero in some cases.

As a new order takes shape, fixed-rate loans look a good defensive move for borrowers who fear rates, when they rise again, could stay high for some time.

Among lenders, there's a spring 'nip' in the air, a sense the worst is behind us.

Gloom began to lift in mid-April when our biggest lender, Halifax, offered to pay up to £1,000 of a homebuyer's council tax for a year to any borrower taking a mortgage with a deposit of at least 10 per cent.

Are lenders actually keen to find new customers with house prices still falling, possibly by eight to 10 per cent for the rest of 2009? Plainly they are, because rivals have followed Halifax's lead.

Woolwich, the lending arm of Barclays, has slashed rates on two, three, four and five-year fixes, starting at 3.69 per cent for two years (to maximum loan to value (LTV) of 70 per cent).

For remortgagers (max LTV 75 per cent), Abbey reckons its three-year fix at 4.09 per cent, seven-year at 4.99 per cent and 15-year at 5.38 per cent, are its lowest in a decade.

Abbey's Nici Auchlam-Gardiner says their research shows that for remortgagers, a third are looking for a tracker, and over half will choose a two-year tracker.

"With a best buy rate of Base Rate plus 2.45 per cent, borrowers should also seriously consider the two-year tracker."

Andrew Hagger at Moneynet.co.uk isn't so sure: "There is a feeling trackers won't look so good once rates move up again. New trackers around 2.5 per cent over base mean a rate of 5.5 per cent if base rate gets back to three per cent," he says.

And trackers often have Early Repayment Charges lurking in the small print, expensive when borrowers get another loan.

Fee-free deals are back in fashion too: Yorkshire Bank offers remortgages with no arrangement fees on fixed-rate, offset and current account loans.

But Hagger says fee free is not always cheapest: "On a £150,000 loan over 25 years (75 per cent LTV), for instance, an HSBC fix at 3.99 per cent with a £599 fee costs £1,570 less over three years than Alliance & Leicester's fee free loan at 4.69 per cent."

Perhaps the most encouraging sign mortgage markets are easing is HSBC's £1bn offered as 90 per cent LTV loans – a two-year fix at 4.99 per cent (fee £1,499), a two-year fix at 5.49 per cent (fee £199) and a lifetime tracker at 4.09 per cent plus base rate (currently 4.59 per cent) with non-refundable fee of £999. To qualify, HSBC borrowers must open a current account, which charges a monthly fee – and with access to current account details, the bank could make further efforts to sell financial products.

HSBC, with its first direct subsidiary, could take 13 per cent of the 2009 mortgage market – against three per cent in 2007. It isn't saddled with unprofitable mortgages hitting rival lenders who grabbed market share before boom turned to bust.

Ray Boulger at brokers John Charcol says households should focus on two strategies at this stage. Firstly, money saved on low mortgage rates should go to pay outstanding debt on mortgages, credit cards, and other loans. Don't splurge on luxuries and holidays.

Secondly, rates will be higher than they are today, so borrowers should be in a position to absorb them with comfort: "The key question is when rates rise. We could see a move in early-2010, or low rates could stay for two years. A big danger is that when the Bank of England injects its second £75bn into the economy – the first expires at the end of May – inflationary pressures could be unleashed, and rate rises would be needed to control them."

Whilst prices keep falling, borrowers who delay remortgaging could have problems finding a new loan in a year, if they need a higher LTV because of falling values.

Darren Cook at Moneyfacts.co.uk is equally fearful that lenders' big concern is to play safe: "Banks, far from predicting the end of the slump, are hedging bets by increasing the number of their best mortgages to those fortunate enough to have a 40 per cent deposit. The average mortgage rate for a 60 per cent LTV is 4.29 per cent, compared to 5.29 per cent six months ago, and availability within this tier has risen too."

Boulger says some borrowers might still take a tracker loan with a 'droplock' option enabling them to lock into a fix later. There is a case, for example, for taking an HSBC tracker and switching when HSBC offers fixes for longer than two years. But borrowers may have to pay more for a higher LTV limit.

"People keen to remortgage get a nasty shock from valuations at five to 10 per cent lower than they expected," says Boulger. "My advice, if you have equity of less than 30 per cent, is to fix straightaway and in most cases, to take a five-year fix, which will look cheap if rates stay high for two to three years.

"Borrowers on low LTVs (below 75 per cent) may have a case for not rushing into a fix. They should keep an eye on available deals, to fix in late-2009/early-2010."

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Make a confident investment in key areas of business

KENT'S business advisory service Business Link, says there are three areas to focus on if you want your firm to survive in the downturn.

The report The Rise of the Super SME Through the Recession by research company Opinion Matters highlighted the fact that businesses which are confident about their future had increased or maintained levels of investment in one of the three key areas; IT , marketing and training.

Investment does not necessarily mean a big cash outlay. It can be an investment of time, resources and knowledge focus – making the most of affordable options freely available through general purpose technology such as the internet.

Almost half of all successful businesses surveyed (47 per cent) had kept up investment in IT, indicating the IT infrastructure they had in place was helping to keep the workforce optimised for success.

For example, businesses with a mobile-enabled workforce were found to be 60 per cent more likely to forecast an increase in growth during the next 12 months – indicating the vital role flexible working practices and technologies play in successful business.

DEVELOPMENT: IT is one of three key areas worth focusing on for the future

Among successful businesses, 43 per cent had actually increased investment in marketing, contributing to their success and long-term prospects.

You can get up to date with the latest low-cost online marketing trends at a sales and marketing event near you.

Rather than cutting training budgets over the past 12 months, successful businesses were more likely to have increased investment, with 39 per cent of these actually spending more on training in the last 12 months than ever before.

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Keep people in the know

By **TONY PATEY**

CLASSROOMS can be crucibles of delight – and angst – when it comes to doing 'practicals', especially in something like business studies, which most people wouldn't think of as hands-on subject like chemistry.

But good teachers know memory is best primed when doing something rather than just being told

about it, and business studies is no exception. Take communication, one of the most important management tools.

I used to start my A-level communication module with Chinese whispers – sticking a student in each corner of the room and getting them to verbally pass round a short message I wrote down for the first person to memorise.

We all know the party game – the message ends up totally distorted at the end when the last student says what they had been told.

I once did it with Chinese students; it blew their minds, because in China they had to sit, listen and learn by rote. Actually physically doing something like this was alien, almost embarrassing, for them – but the lesson was still learnt.

When you're running a business, word-of-mouth rumours can get out of hand and badly damage, even ruin, you. Send out the right message, in the right way, to internal and external stakeholders. And it's even more important in an economic downturn.

As a reporter I've had emails about what was going to happen in newspaper groups at the other end of the country – and when the announcements came I found the info I had received was only vaguely right.

A rumour once swept round the world – in minutes – in the 80s that "Reagan was dead" – panic in all the markets, Wall Street and our stock exchange went berserk. But it was another Regan, different spelling, in the US administration – not dear old Ronnie.

It can be easy to hide, take a quick holiday perhaps, when there's bad news to give out, even just to keep inside your office and hope the world'll go away. But it doesn't work.

"Do not hide," is the advice of Paul A Argenti, professor of corporate communication at Tuck School of Business, Dartmouth College. "Not hearing from you will breed additional suspicion and mistrust among stakeholders."

Communicate often and early, he says, and talk to people directly – hearing information straight from the horse's mouth gives reassurance and stops distortion – and people can question you directly, not second-hand. That alone can diffuse difficult situations.

Also, he says, get inside the media's head. Try seeing how the press might spin your message.

A difficult one, that. A lot depends on the medium, and this is where some really specialised knowledge is called for, usually from someone in PR who has had a lot of experience as a journalist or broadcaster.

What they should tell you is that trying to put a gloss on something that doesn't need it will soon be swept aside, and the information will be seen for what it is.

Very few people have succeeded in hoodwinking the media over bad news – the only time I've ever seen it done was when Harold Wilson was prime minister in the 70s.

Inflation was rocketing, shock horror. Mr Wilson, a very clever man, brought in the first index-linked savings certificates – they were called Granny Bonds because they were for retired people (but, of course, everyone gave money to their grannies to cash in on them).

The media gave the thumbs-up because people now had the chance to make some money. Until some maverick City reporter on a tabloid stood up at a press conference and asked: "Isn't this giving people a vested interest in rising inflation, when we should be doing everything we can to bring it down?"

No guesses for who that was...

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When it's time to move

By **TONY PATEY**

EVEN in the good times companies close or are taken over. So, if the worst does happen, what do you need to do?

Business Link has the following advice about the key points you will need to consider if you are thinking of selling or closing.

Who you need to tell

Your tax and any official records concerning your business will need to be up to date and complete when you sell your company.

You should also inform all your customers and suppliers so they have the chance to raise any outstanding payments, credits and liabilities, and you can account for them when you finalise your accounts and tax affairs.

You will need to follow the necessary statutory procedures and form filling to resolve any outstanding tax, VAT and National Insurance matters with HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

If you are selling a company and there will be changes to its secretary or directors, you must inform Companies House.

If you employ more than 50 people you will also need to take account of the Information and Consultation of Employees (ICE) Regulations.

Employees

You have obligations to safeguard their rights, finalise their pay and deductions, and issue their P45 form. You may also be able to offer them help in coping with the challenges arising from losing their job.

STAFF: As an employer you are obliged to safeguard the rights of your workforce

The position of an employee with regards to rights to redundancy pay, company pension payments, etc, will vary according to the circumstances of the business closure (eg, insolvency, voluntary liquidation), the business type (eg, partnership, limited company, sole trader) and the length of the employee's employment to date.

Tax and VAT when closing

When you close your business, HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) will need to assess how much your final tax bill should be. It is essential to let HMRC know of any possible tax liabilities you have as soon as they are known, even if you are currently unable to pay the tax

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on from your business

PAPERWORK: Assets will need to be brought up to date for your final day of business

you owe. If business assets are sold and the proceeds go to the individual owners of the business, or if shares in the company are sold, the individuals concerned may have to pay Capital Gains Tax.

If you are VAT registered, you will need to inform HMRC. Once they are satisfied that your registration should be cancelled they will confirm the date and issue a final VAT return, on which you account for VAT on stock and certain assets on hand at the close of business on the day your registration is cancelled.

Insolvency and bankruptcy

Bankruptcy applies to individuals, and is one route you can take if you are a sole trader or partner in a partnership and have debts you cannot pay.

It frees you from your debts, but your assets are divided among your creditors and restrictions may be placed on your future business activities by a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order issued by a court if your conduct is considered to have been dishonest or blameworthy – this can last between two years and 15 years.

A company may be forced to close by being taken to court by its creditors, lenders, shareholders, or by the Government or legal authorities seeking to wind up the business.

Alternatively, the owners or directors of the business may decide not to continue operating the business and apply to have the business wound up.

The court may rule that the company is passed into the hands of the Official Receiver. The receiver runs the company in the best interests of creditors and shareholders until its liquidation – ie, the sale of the company's assets. Any money raised is used to pay off the company's debts.

Tax and VAT when selling

You will need to follow the necessary statutory procedures to resolve any outstanding tax, VAT and National Insurance matters with HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

When you sell a business, you may have to pay Capital Gains Tax if you made a profit – referred to as a gain – from the sale of the assets. But, if you use the proceeds from the sale to buy another business, you might be able to defer the gain through business asset roll-over relief.

If your company is registered for VAT, contact HMRC and complete form VAT 7 to cancel your registration, or form VAT 68 to transfer your registration to the new owner.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Divorce doesn't have to split up your business

NOT all problems faced by businesspeople are just in the boardroom and workshop.

If you own a business and you're going through a divorce you can take some comfort from a more realistic approach towards the valuation of your assets, says a Kent lawyer.

Susi Gillespie, a solicitor specialising in divorce at law firm Furley Page, says the change of heart follows a recent High Court judgment where a wife's claim following a 15-year marriage hinged on the estimated value of her husband's restaurant business.

The wife reckoned it was worth £5.3 million and the husband £1.7m. In summing up, the judge stressed that the valuation of a business was an art not a science and ultimately a matter of opinion. He also pointed out that the business in question had been operating successfully at the same site for more than 30 years, so it couldn't be defined as solely matrimonial property.

The judge refuted the wife's unsubstantiated claim that the family had received benefits in kind from the business which were equivalent to £80,000 a year.

Ms Gillespie said: "Detailed evidence from forensic accountants and an expensive dispute over the exact value of the business may be pointless if the business is the means by which the husband is going to earn his income and maintain the family in the future.

"The case also shows that where a business was started before a marriage, the husband will get some credit for the value it had already acquired so its total value won't be treated as part of the matrimonial pot. Just as important, this case highlights the need for allegations of fringe benefits from a business to be properly demonstrated if they're going to be reflected in the value of a business."

Established in 1725, Furley Page has offices in Canterbury, Chatham, Whitstable and Lloyd's of London.

FALL OUT: Susi Gillespie, inset, says the courts are more realistic about business assets

BIG SAVINGS: Check out small cars like the Chevrolet Matiz and Mazda2 to cut your fuel bills and emissions – and your road tax

Road tax weapon is blunted but drivers can save money

By **STEVE LOADER**

GOVERNMENT efforts to use road tax to beat drivers into giving up so-called gas guzzlers have met with mixed success.

There can be no doubt that escalating tax or vehicle excise duty (VED) over the past couple of years has helped fuel downsizing, but there was outcry after the March, 2008, Budget at 'draconian' rates to be applied to larger cars, especially with the recession looming.

Consequently, Chancellor Alistair Darling backtracked last November and proposed amended charges from April 1, 2009, to soften the blow at the top end of the market, though the Government says VED will continue to be amended in future to maintain the downward force in vehicle sizes and emissions.

They will also continue to be based on CO2 emissions rather than fuel consumption and apply only to cars registered after March 1, 2001; inconsistent emissions data on older cars means these are taxed simply at £120/year if the engine is 1,549cc or less and then £185 if it is above – something of a bargain for the owners of large older 'gas guzzlers' if they are content to bear higher fuel bills, opt for a £1,500-2,000 LPG (liquid petroleum gas) conversion or cover relatively few miles.

The new rates are weighted even more in favour of the latest, cleanest and most miserly small cars. Models emitting 100g/km of CO2 or less, like the new Ford Fiesta ECOnetic, for instance, qualify for Band A or zero rating.

The payable steps are: Bands B and C (101-120g/km) – £35; Bands D and E (121-140g/km) – £120; Band F (141-150g/km) – £125; Band G (151- 160g/km) – £150; Bands H and I (161-180g/km) – £175; Bands J and K (181-225g/km) – £215; Band L (226-255g/km) – £405; Band M (255g/km plus) – £405.

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Fuel for thought

THERE are signs that diesel – the wonderfuel of the past – could run out of puff as the race to cut emissions and save money gets tougher.

Its original appeal was the cheapness of the fuel, greater mpg and the better low down pulling power of the engines and their ability to meet tighter emissions legislation.

However, diesel now commands an increasing premium against petrol and there are doubts whether the engines can continue to meet ever tougher emission laws.

Meanwhile, petrol has hit back with smaller, lighter and cleaner engines with turbocharging for flexibility, while there are other options emerging to save money and the planet.

Hybrid

These partner conventional engines with electric units, but two powerplants and power supplies – fuel tank plus batteries – mean extra weight, while production complexity raises prices so buyers must cover many miles to balance this. Motorway mpg is hardly better than a standard car. High toxicity of the batteries is also a worry at the end of the car's life.

LPG

Liquid petroleum gas seems an excellent alternative fuel due to lower duty and emissions and cheaper car tax. However, the calorific value and consequent mpg is slightly lower than petrol and it will cost at least £1,500 to convert an existing vehicle.

There are more LPG filling points across the country than before though and LPG costs about half that of petrol and diesel at the pump and emits less CO2 and with fewer NOx and particulates.

Electric

These should be cheap to run, but battery technology cannot yet guarantee ranges to satisfy. There is the worry too that emissions are simply transferred from an exhaust pipe to the chimney of a fossil fuel-burning power station.

Biofuels

Fuel derived partly from vegetable matter appeals since plants absorb CO2 during growth and simply release it again when burned. Most road fuels in the UK will contain at least five per cent biofuel by next year, but there is concern that using arable land to grow 'biofuel' will strain global food supplies.

IN THE TANK: Diesel versions of cars like the Peugeot 207 (main picture) have fuelled the drive to small diesels, but is petrol fighting back? Alternatively you can buy a petrol and LPG Proton GEN-2 (top) for the same price as a standard petrol model

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3 The Government giving away money.
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*Model shown is Rio 1.4 @ £5,195 On The Road (OTR) after deducting £2,000 Government and Kia Scrappage incentive. Government Scrappage incentive applies to cars or vans registered on or before 31 July 1999 only when traded in against new cars. Scrapped vehicles must have been registered to the purchaser for at least the 12 months preceding the purchase of the vehicle and be MOT'd and taxed. Terms and conditions apply. Prices correct at time of going to press and specifi cation is subject to change without notice. OTR price includes VAT, number plates, delivery, 12 months Government VED and vehicle fi rst registration fee.

Drive clever – save better

By **STEVE LOADER**

MAN and machine in harmony can slash pounds off your motoring bill.

The key is to downsize and run a cheaper car and then save even more by smarter driving and journey planning.

Avoid short journeys and get fitter by walking or cycling; a cold engine wastes fuel and can produce 60 per cent more pollution than a warm one and short car journeys require extra servicing and wear the engine faster.

If you must drive then follow these tips from the Institute of Advanced Motorists and RAC Foundation:

• Plan your route to save strain on car and driver. Take the most direct route – a sat nav can help – and go off peak if possible. If you commute, think about car sharing, Park and Ride bus schemes or other public transport.

• Have your vehicle serviced regularly. Neglected engines reduce fuel economy by ten per cent or more. Catalytic converters do clean emissions, but only when they are properly maintained.

• Check tyres – under-inflated tyres need replacing more often (itself an environmental problem), are dangerous and waste fuel. Check pressures weekly.

• Obey speed limits to save money and stay legal. Feather the throttle as you reach cruising speed; 56mph uses 25 per cent less fuel than 70mph and a smoother driving style saves fuel.

• Accelerate briskly without racing the engine – pulling away too fast uses up to 60 per cent more fuel. Intelligent gear changes at modest engine speeds can save up to 15 per cent in fuel.

• Reduce drag – remove roof racks and carriers when not in use. Open windows cause drag and lower fuel economy. Remove unnecessary and heavy boot luggage and accessories and wide tyres that add rolling resistance. Air conditioning costs fuel too so try to use the fan and vents unassisted.

• Buy green fuel and use less. Look for low sulphur diesel (City diesel) or cleaner petrol (low sulphur/aromatics). Consider a conversion to LPG (liquid petroleum gas) – half the price of petrol and cleaner.

• Think ahead – there is no point rushing and then having to brake suddenly.

• Be a tank miser. Why fill the tank right to the brim and slow down your car by carrying more weight than is necessary?

• Turn off the engine after two minutes to save fuel and emissions if stuck in a jam.

• ***For more eco driving tips see Julie Maddocks' online video report at: http://www.yourkenttv.co.uk/community.***

SAVINGS: You can cut motoring bills through better driving and downsizing to a city car like the new Nissan Pixo or Skoda Fabia supermini

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Essential guide to where you can save

- Blakes Hair & Beauty in Canterbury is offering 10 per cent discount when booking together a manicure and pedicure plus any two waxings of your choice
- Maidstone Kia in Maidstone is offering free set of mats with any new car purchased before May 31
- KOS is offering all-seasons duck duvet, two duvets that button together from only £39.99. Save over 50 per cent
- Wildlife Heritage Foundation Animal Park in Ashford is offering an amazing day being close to big cats. All-day dedicated guide with buffet lunch, tea/coffee for only £99
- Robins and Day Motors in Maidstone, Canterbury and Rochester are offering MOTs from £39.99. Service and MOT from £129.99 and seasonal checks from £19.99
- H&H Flooring in Deal is offering free underlay upgrade on all carpets
- KOS is offering big button digital cordless phones just £24.99 save £20
- Canterbury Hyundai in Canterbury is offering £29.95 MOTs while you wait
- KOS is offering a set of Bypass AND anvil secateurs for just £16.99, save £10
- KOS is offering a Remington Titanium Washable Shaver only £49.99 inc p&p, save £50 off RRP

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New car deal starts

By **STEVE LOADER**

REACTION to the Government's £2,000 incentive towards scrapping an older car in return for a new one was lukewarm from trade and customers alike.

Carmakers and dealers could also be forgiven for biting their lips on learning that they must contribute half the Government's two grand giveaway.

Nevertheless, most of the trade has not only embraced the deal, but put extra incentives on the table, such as even more cash, extra specification and zero per cent finance – though this is no longer a big deal when interest rates are so low.

On the other hand, consumers with savings will know they are receiving precious little return and it is tempting to seek a psychological boost from buying a new motor that should be cheaper to fuel and tax.

Canny buyers will also know they should get a shed-load of discount at the moment, whether or not they currently drive a 'banger' ten years old or more and qualify for the scrappage grant.

Of course, anyone who has a scrapper to cash in has a further bargaining chip not to be tossed lightly into the deal.

Britain's market leader Ford says buyers can expect up to £5,000 off some of its cars, including the scrappage allowance.

Look at the extremes of the market to make the best use of the scheme though. A £2,000 grant buys a lot of any small car like the Hyundai i10 – Germany's scrappage scheme has boosted i10 sales by 662 per cent – and you could not expect usually to get a few hundred quid off when profit margins on small cars match their size. However, a £2,000 handout makes it more affordable to someone on a tight budget and it will be cheaper to fuel and tax and better for the environment.

OFF THE ROAD: The new scheme encourages you to send your old car for scrap

At the other end of the scale, what about that Beemer you always wanted? Check out a BMW 116d (from £17,605). You would normally struggle to get money off – certainly not £2,000 – and you start saving even more with an average of 60mpg.

Anyone buying a new car is still taking a big step though unless they aim to save longer term though lower fuel bills and road tax.

The Government is using escalating road tax or VED (vehicle excise duty) to drive people into smaller and cleaner cars and a new scale of zero to £405/year came into force on April 1 (see previous page) and is set to become tougher.

By 2010, gas guzzling limos or 4x4s may face £950 road tax in the first year, although anyone spending £50-100,000 on a car is unlikely to be put off by such a paltry sum. As a result, some manufacturers have produced models exempt from VED, by sneaking below the 100g/km CO2 emissions mark into band-A.

Most manufacturers also now have an 'Eco' sub-branding for their lowest emission models – Vauxhall uses the ecoFLEX sub-branding.

Brilliant as they are, 'eco' models often cost more since they have diesel engines and spe-

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Model shown is Fabia GreenLine 1.4 TDI PD 80bhp DPF at £10,253.04 RRP. **Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the Fabia GreenLine: Urban 53.3 (5.3), *Extra-urban 83.1 (3.4), Combined 68.9 (4.1). CO_2 emissions for the Fabia GreenLine 109g/km.** Reduction applied to the RRP including factory fitted optional extras and is the equivalent of VAT at 15%. VAT is applicable and will be shown on the customer's invoice. Excludes Channel Islands. Offer subject to availability and may be amended or withdrawn at any time. Please see retailer for full terms and conditions.

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to make more sense

INCENTIVE: Vauxhall has embraced the Government's scrappage programme, but is topping up the £2,000 treasury/manufacturer grant with cashbacks and other deals on certain models – the popular Corsa supermini qualifies for zero per cent finance as well as grant aid

cial 'green' features that do not yet deliver the economy of scale savings available to makers across the whole model range.

What is more, saving road tax is not such a great incentive when many conventional superminis sit in the lowest road tax band of £35 a year anyway; over three years with an eco model, saving £105 is irrelevant if you spend more on buying that car and are then putting expensive diesel in the tank.

So, check out conventional equivalents of eco models and don't dismiss petrol power; that fuel is still cheaper and makes sense for low mileage users, while emission and consumption levels are closing the gap on the diesel equivalents.

Finally, look again at what you have to part-exchange; you might have lost a packet in depreciation on that big 4x4, but work out what it will cost you to run it for the next three years – it might be a lot less than the cost of chopping it for a new car.

Essential guide to where you can save

- Lexterten furniture store in Westgate-on-Sea is offering £100 off Elevating TV cabinets
- Old Sawmills furniture store in Ashford is offering 20 per cent off all showroom items
- Oliver Carpets in Ramsgate and Herne Bay is offering 10 per cent off when you spend more than £250
- Pomphreys Motors in Bapchild, Sittingbourne is offering half-price MOT with every service
- Village Hotel in Maidstone is offering £5 off the carvery lunch on any Bank Holiday Monday
- Living Out log cabin store in Chestfield, Maidstone, is offering free installation on all standard range of cabins
- Aylesford Self Storage in Aylesford is offering three months' free storage for a year for all new document storage clients
- County Garage in Herne Bay is offering free health check and free 29-point including wash and vacuum
- Baileys Nissan Motors in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off MOTs
- Medway Stoves solid fuel heating store in Medway is offering 15 per cent off all stoves and installations purchased before June 30, 2009

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Chevrolet range fuel consumption in mpg (L/100 km), urban 40.9 (6.9) to 26.4 (10.7), extra urban 67.3 (4.2) to 38.7 (7.3), combined 54.3 (5.2) to 32.8 (8.6) the official co2 emission is 119 to 225 g/km.

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Letters continued from page 38

Standards on the slide

I disagree with the proposal for an academy in Sevenoaks. I am concerned about co-education on the basis of my experience since the mid-1960s of being in a mixed-sex environment in the workplace, and this leads me to think that mixed-sex education will lead to lower standards. My experience has been that mixed-sex colleagues show a lower level of ability than was the case in the all-male environment of my schooldays at the Judd School, Tonbridge.

I am not sure whether this discrepancy results from Judd having been (in those days) all-male, or simply from having been single-sex. I have traditionally been of the opinion that the former was the case, but I am prepared to accept otherwise. Either way, there is a discrepancy and I cannot believe co-education is a good idea.

Secondly, I object to the way a non-selective education is being touted as a viable alternative to a grammar education. People with a non-selective education are often woefully inadequate in their grasp of English grammar, syntax and construction.

This is true both of older people who left school at 14 and of younger people (even if they are graduates) from a comprehensive background.

Worse still, there is something in the ethos of non-selective schools that dictates that, when people from that background dominate the management structure of a workplace, then the culture discriminates against employees who have not come from a similar background. I fear there will be problems in future when former pupils of the academy reach management positions.

In similar vein it will be noted that, where certain industries and occupations seem particularly prone to strikes and industrial action, these are invariably those that traditionally recruit from non-selective schools. It appears trade union militancy is in some way the product of something in the ethos of non-selective schools.

A related point is the way in which some employers put an overemphasis on vocational, rather than academic, qualifications. My experience working for BT was that people in engineering grades were given much better promotion prospects, while there was discrimination against staff in other grades (although that was in part a consequence of a management structure made up almost entirely of people who had left school at 14). Ideally, there should be a national system, run by universities, for checking the relative worth of different types of examinations. But my fear in the context of the academy is that people wanting to take vocational qualifications would be given superior facilities to those wanting academic qualifications.

That sits uneasily with the stated aim of the academy in intending to specialise in language work, because this sort of overemphasis on the vocational will produce incompetence in English language skills.

Then there is bullying issue. Quite simply, people who go to the academy, but who otherwise would have gone to grammar schools, will be bullied by their less academic contemporaries. I believe the proposed academy is ill-conceived and hope that, even at this late stage, the plans will be reconsidered and, hopefully, scrapped.

John Humphrey, Sevenoaks

Disabled have rights

The animal rights lobby (Letters, last week) claims to be helping animals, but they forget one important group – the people with health problems and disabilities who benefit directly from animal-based research.

Until recently I had a serious spinal condition, which left me in massive pain and hardly able to work. Thanks to animal-based research I had an operation where bone was taken out of my pelvis and placed into my spine to reinforce it. The pain has now gone, I can work full-time, and have a social life. The research underpinning this operation could only have been done on animals. Test tubes, tissue samples and computers won't let you work out how bones fuse together. While some testing is done on humans, it is based on a firm foundation of results from animal tests.

The animal rights lobby tell us that we should treat animals in the same way as humans. But if we do that, we're condemning people with health problems and disabilities to pain, to isolation, to unemployment, and to massively reduced quality of life.

I want to see the best possible conditions for animals, and will be happy when we have alternatives that work. But until that day, we need to keep animal research legal.

After all, a disabled human is worth as much as an able-bodied one.

Kevin Elliott, Oxford

Of mice and men

It is a pity Mr Collins (Letters, last week) has so selectively picked his facts. Animal research may not have produced a cure for Aids, but it has brought about treatments that has turned Aids into a manageable disease, rather than the death sentence it offered 30 years ago.

Furthermore, of the "many scientific, viable alternatives", Mr Collins cannot name a single one.

The fact is these "alternatives" are in fact complementary methods such as computer models, cell cultures and micro-dosing, which are used alongside, rather than instead of, animal experiments.

As far as doctors go, I am surprised that 100 per cent of GPs do not think that results from any experimental tool, whether it is a test tube, a mouse or a human clinical trial, "can" be misleading. – that is not to say that they believe they usually are.

In a recent survey of GPs, 96 per cent agreed animal research has played a crucial part in the medical progress, and 88 per cent agreed new medicines should be tested on animals before undergoing human trials.

Finally there have been five independent inquiries into animal research in the last 10 years. Although I support lifesaving animal research, I object not to Mr Collins' beliefs, but to animal rights campaigners' tactic of misrepresenting science and research in the UK to suit their ethical beliefs.

Tom Holder, Speaking of Research

KCC: The hole truth

With the upcoming KCC elections, I hope everyone will consider the state of the roads and pavements. People have fallen over, cars have been damaged and cycling is much more dangerous. KCC's answer is that, after 12 years of Conservative rule, the backlog of pavement repairs will take 226 years to clear. I'm not sure we'll be around to find out.

Instead, KCC has spent millions publicising itself and paying managers large salaries. And that's not to mention a few quid that went to Iceland. All money which could have been better used to improve our safety. The Tories are relying on the Government's unpopularity to retain control of Kent, but I hope voters see through it.

If you are happy with the state of the pavements and highways then vote Conservative, or don't vote at all. If you want the county to be run the way the country is run, then you can vote Labour.

But if you want the plans, the people and the policies to get the condition of the roads back in the right direction then you should vote for the Liberal Democrats.

Keith Nevols, Lib Dem candidate, Swale Central, Sittingbourne

Give us a referendum

We should not be allowing our Parliament and judiciary to be overridden by the anti-democratic bureaucracy and supranational courts of the EU, the majority of whose judges are appointed from countries whose judicial systems are less than satisfactory.

Neither should we be handing our citizens over unquestioningly to other jurisdictions.

The levels of corruption in Brussels make our expenses scandal look very small beer.

Unfortunately we need to be within a European trading block and simply to walk out is not an option. The Commonwealth is no alternative, either in terms of market or geography. The world has changed in four decades and not only are the major Commonwealth countries no longer our natural trading partners, but why should they revert to being client states? We ditched them when we went into Europe and that still rankles. Our Government should be offering us the promised referendum on the Lisbon Treaty, which they ought to campaign against, and renegotiating our membership.

We should be part of a free trade and co-operation area, not a political union.

E Egan, Harrietsham

Five-point manifesto

The Countryside Alliance has launched its rural manifesto, our campaigning focus up to the general election.

The manifesto identifies five key areas and is urging supporters to sign up to its aims. As Britain's best known and most effective rural campaigning group, we are offering the next government a blueprint for putting the countryside at the heart of its policy. The manifesto promotes changes in five key areas that will make a real and lasting difference to the countryside: housing; education; farming; country pursuits and services.

Our countryside is a national treasure admired around the world, but it is also a home and workplace for millions.

Yet those who live and work there can be forgiven for feeling at times that it does not receive the political support it deserves. There should be no conflict over town or country. The challenge is doing the best for both.

Our aims are realistic and achievable. In these challenging times a vital, working and thriving countryside for the benefit of the whole nation is more necessary than ever. You can find out more and sign up to our aims at www.countryside-alliance.org.uk.

Kate Hoey MP, chair, Countryside Alliance

Ban these cruel snares

Is the countryside around you safe? The most likely answer is probably not, as revealed in a new report by the League Against Cruel Sports.

War on Wildlife highlights the shameful tactics carried out on many estates up and down the country where wildlife is being systematically slaughtered to protect gamebirds being reared for shooting.

Over the last two years investigators have found sickening evidence of animal suffering and death on many estates, with snares being responsible for much of the torture. These silent killers are claiming the lives of thousands of animals including protected species and even domestic pets.

Mass slaughter on this scale is not acceptable and the league is stepping up its campaign for a ban on snares. We urge readers to contact their MP to voice support for a complete ban on the use of such primitive and outdated traps in our countryside.

Katy Roberts, League Against Cruel Sports

Registration deadline

With only a few days to go before Tuesday's deadline for registering to vote, I call on all readers to make sure they are on the electoral register.

On June 4, voters across the UK will be having their say on who represents them in the European Parliament and at some English councils. However, not everyone will be in a position to vote and many are unaware that they could be turned away on polling day.

In particular, thousands of young people and those who have moved in recent years may be without a voice unless they register now.

For more information on registering to vote call free on 0800 3 280 280 or visit www.aboutmyvote.com to make sure your voice is heard.

Andrew Scallan, director of electoral administration, Electoral Commission

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Students sell their designs to judges

WINDOW-dressers studying at North West Kent College have won a regional competition after impressing a panel of judges at Bluewater.

Piriyanka Logendran and Rachael O'Connell, both 17, teamed up to defeat their opponents from the London College of Communication in the skillVM final organised by Skillsmart Retail.

The youngsters had just four hours and a budget of £200 to create their winning design, which represented the gap in the ozone layer and the dangers of climate change.

Course teacher Laura Lewis said: "Piri and Rachael's fabulous window display embodies the ethos of the 3D design course – that successful design solutions come from applying creativity and innovation to a client's brief.

"The hard work and dedication they put into their work resulted in a full-scale realisation of their design and the quality of this has been recognised by the judges."

DRESSING FOR SUCCESS: Students from North West Kent College won

All that hard graft pays off for carers

FOSTER carers who successfully completed a range of qualifications were recognised for their hard work at a Kent County Council ceremony.

They received awards at the authority's Maidstone headquarters after earning NVQs in health and social care in children and young people, and BTECs in working with traumatised children.

Head of specialist children's services Liz Totman said: "Caring for a family, working and studying is hard work.

"Foster carers are to be congratulated as they do all of this 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

Building bridges between college and workplace

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knightk@kosmedia.co.uk

STUDENTS at Canterbury College will receive a helping hand into employment after a new agreement with the city council.

The 'memorandum of understanding' will see the college and council working together to benefit small businesses through combining their resources to deliver training events and by encouraging youngsters to stay in the area once they have completed their education.

Mark Hill, director of business and associated services at the college, said he was looking forward to a successful partnership.

He added: "This agreement formalises our excellent relationship with the city council and will enable us to maximise opportunities to improve our services to and training for local businesses.

"It will also enable us to support a wide range of activities in association with the council and other agencies, which will enhance our responsiveness in meeting the education and training needs of employers and their employees."

As part of the memorandum, the council and college will encourage businesses to participate in work placement programmes. They will also devise a strategy to attract new companies to Canterbury and widen the local economy. They have also agreed to look for funding opportunities – especially via Europe – to help them achieve their objectives.

Students will benefit from guest speakers and case studies provided by the council for certain subjects, as well as being given the opportunity to undertake work experience placements at the council and at local businesses as part of the Canterbury4Business scheme.

The city council has also promised to implement a programme of modern apprenticeships while encouraging its contractors to do the same.

Meanwhile, the college will nominate student representatives to sit on the Canterbury4Business board and work with the city council's local economy and tourism team to support development.

City council chief executive Colin Carmichael was glad to have put pen to paper on the arrangement.

He said: "I'm very pleased to have signed this agreement with Canterbury College to formalise our partnership with them. We will be able to put many more opportunities the way of small businesses and help make the district the place our young people want to work in."

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NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Community Services

Lay Chair - Ref: SE9616

Independent Committee Members - Ref: SE9616I

If you've gained senior level expertise in the private, public or voluntary sectors, we can offer an exceptional opportunity to put your talents to use by making a positive difference to the lives of people in your community. NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Community Services has a Lay Chair and up to 3 Independent committee member vacancies on their Board.

Essential expertise for the Lay Chair

Candidates' applications will need to demonstrate that they have the necessary experience as follows:

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- experience of building alliances and working relationships with a range of stakeholders.

Essential expertise for the Independent committee members

Candidates' applications will need to demonstrate experience in one or more of the following areas.

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- High level governance experience, including strategic planning, financial, risk and performance management experience, gained in the public, private, or voluntary sector;
- Commercial Business Development expertise, including supporting new ventures and developing business opportunities;
- Finance experience, gained at a senior level.

You will need to demonstrate a range of competencies required to contribute effectively at board level including strategic thinking, team working and excellent communication skills.

Preference will be given to candidates who live in the area served by NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent.

For an informal discussion about the role with the Chair, Colin Tomson, please contact him on 01227 795 024 prior to the closing date for applications. This will play no part in the selection process.

The time commitment for the Lay Chair is up to three and a half days each week and remuneration is £20,587 pa and for the Independent committee members is approximately two and a half days per month and remuneration is £6,005 pa.

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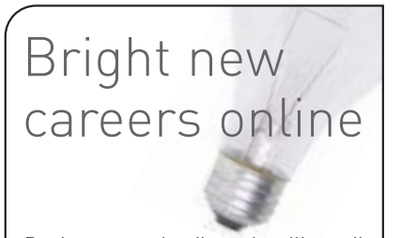

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37 hrs per week, salary starting at £33,858 per annum.

The closing date for the above posts is Tuesday 26 May 2009 at 12 noon

For an information pack please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone) quoting the above reference.

Staff benefits include:

- *Pension & Life Assurance Scheme*
- *Proximity to main bus & train stations*
- *Close to City Centre*
- *Sports Hall & Gym*
- *Generous Holiday Allowance*
- *Staff Discount Scheme*

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

European Union European Social Fund Investing in jobs and skills

CLICK www.canterburycollege.ac.uk/job-vacancies

CALL *01227 811282 (24 hr answerphone)*

Demanding, exciting and rewarding!

If this is the type of career you are looking for, then please continue

Personal Assistant

to the Principal & Chief Executive

Circa £30,000 plus final salary pension, generous leave and benefits

MidKent College is moving into an exciting phase in the history of the College with the relocation from the Horsted and City Way campuses to a stunning new £86m new build located at Lower Lines, Chatham in September this year. Combining this move with the recent award of the Public Private Partnership contract for the Royal School of Military Engineering at Brompton Barracks and the planned development of the existing Maidstone campus, it is a hectic time for the College. MidKent College now has an annual turnover of £45m, a staff of over 1,000 and trains around 12,000 students and 3,000 soldiers each year.

The ideal candidate will therefore be joining during a period of significant change with the opportunity to develop your career within this stimulating environment. You will already have direct experience of working for a senior manager and be fully familiar with the demands and rewards of working at this level.

Reporting directly for and supporting the Principal and Chief Executive, you will hold a position of responsibility, developing strong working relationships with the Directors, Senior Leadership Team, Governors and external Stakeholders involved across the MidKent College Group.

Interested: Please forward your CV to ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk or call him on 07725 128661 (after 12th May) for an informal discussion.

A full Job Description/Person Specification and application can be seen at www.midkent.ac.uk

Closing Date: 25th May 2009

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE · POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE · Action for Business College

MidKent College is an equal opportunity employer

MidKent College

The College is committed to Equal Opportunities and to selection on merit. It welcomes applications from all sections of society. We particularly welcome and encourage applications from under represented groups including black, minority ethnic and disabled people.

The smart way to find your next job

JobsforKent.co.uk

HEADTEACHER: PEGGY MURPHY, MA
BOUGHTON LANE, MAIDSTONE, KENT ME15 9QL
TEL: 01622 743925
FAX: 01622 744828
EMAIL: office@five-acre.kent.sch.uk
WEBSITE: www.five-acre.kent.sch.uk

Five Acre Wood School is looking for

MIDDAY MEAL SUPERVISORS

to join our friendly school located on sites at Boughton Lane, Maidstone and Aylesford School Sports College.

The hours will be 11:30 to 1:30 each weekday, term time only. Starting salary will be Kent Scale Band 2 Point 4 - £2876 per annum.

This job will be subject to satisfactory references and an enhanced CRB.

Please contact the school for an application pack by 25th May.

Closing date will be Wednesday 3rd June.
Interviews will be held on Wednesday 10th June.

Five Acre Wood and all its personnel are committed to safeguarding children and young people.

Abbey Court School

"WE GROW PEOPLE"

Abbey Court School, a 'special' school and a 'special' place to work.

We are currently looking for...

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

to join and enhance our large and expanding, high calibre team.

Medway Scale, Grade D2

£14,891 - £18,937 (pay award pending) + SEN Allowance (£1,162)

Are you committed, motivated and enthusiastic? Does 'Every Child Matter' to you? Can you make a difference? If so, share your talents and expertise with us.

Abbey Court is located on 2 sites; Rainham (Primary) and Strood (Secondary and Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 4-19 with severe learning difficulties. Working hours are 32.5 p/w, term time only. Previous experience and/or NNEB (or equivalent) qualifications preferred. Comprehensive training and induction will be provided.

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

For an application pack, please write to/telephone (stating the role for which you are applying): Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent ME2 3SP (01634 338224)

Please note CV's will not be accepted. Closing date: 3.6.2009

Gravesend Grammar School for Girls

A Specialist Science College

Pelham Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0JE
Telephone: 01474 352896 Fax: 01474 331195
Website:www.ggsg.org.uk
email: enquiries@ggsg.org.uk

Science

TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

Maternity Cover – September 2009

We are looking for a well-qualified and enthusiastic Teacher of Mathematics to join a highly successful Faculty. The person appointed would be required to teach up to A' Level. Maths is a very popular option with students and a high proportion go on to study a Mathematical course in Higher Education.

The person appointed will receive high quality mentoring and support. The Faculty enjoys excellent facilities and equipment.

We have been a Specialist Science College since September 2004; this has led to a broad range of innovative practice across the school and we are looking to develop cross-curricular projects involving Mathematics.

The School has a high profile for achievement locally and nationally and prides itself on a strong record of internal professional development including a full induction in the Summer term.

The School is also an Investor in People and an Investor in Careers.

Application forms and further details are available from the Headteacher's Personal Assistant, Mrs M Tong Ralphs. Completed forms should be returned by post, fax or email for the attention of **Mrs E Wilson, Headteacher** no later than

Thursday 21st May 2009

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

WALMER SCIENCE COLLEGE

Salisbury Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent, CT14 7QJ
Telephone : 01304 375212 Fax : 01304 380766
e-mail : admin@walmersciencecollege.co.uk
Headteacher : Simon Heaton BSc (Hons) NPQH.

MIXED 11-18 HIGH SCHOOL 789 ON ROLL
REQUIRED FOR 1st SEPTEMBER 2009

TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

This could either be a full-time post or 0.6 FTE (MPS – R&R ALLOWANCE FOR SUITABLE CANDIDATE)

POSSIBILITY OF 2 I/C FOR SUITABLE CANDIDATE

The post would be suitable for either NQTs or more experienced teachers. A comprehensive induction programme will be offered whatever your status.

The successful applicant will:-

- be a creative teacher with the ability to motivate students of all abilities;
- be enthusiastic and energetic;
- have a commitment to raising standards;
- have a commitment to providing a first class learning experience for all our students.

Walmer Science College is a good school with outstanding features (Ofsted 2007)

Walmer Science College is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and the successful applicant will be required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure via the CRB. For an application form and further details, please contact Mrs Windsor at the school.

Closing date : 19th May 2009

We value diversity in our workforce

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Kent County Council

Stone Bay School, 70 Stone Road, Broadstairs, CT10 1EB
Tel- 01843 863421 Fax- 01843 866652
Email- office@stone-bay.kent.sch.uk

Maintenance Technician

25 HRS PER WEEK, 8.00am.- 1.00pm. MON – FRI
52 weeks per year
SALARY SCALE KS4 POINT 11 – 14 (PRO RATA TO £15,984 - £16,793) ACTUAL SALARY £10,800 - £11,346

Stone Bay School requires a Maintenance Technician to carry out minor repairs and maintenance work throughout the school. We are looking for someone who has an eye for detail and takes pride in a job well done. Basic DIY and good carpentry skills are vital. Reporting to the Caretaker, you will be carrying out tasks such as repairing broken fixtures, fittings and furniture, putting up blinds, changing light bulbs, occasionally moving furniture around classrooms and residential units, clearing blocked drains and guttering, minor plumbing repairs, mending broken fencing, and assisting the cleaning team by collecting up rubbish bags from around the school twice a day.

A clean driving licence is necessary as you will be required to use the school's van and trailer to take damaged items to the landfill site, and may be required to deliver and collect minibuses for MOT/repair. Jet washing the minibuses, maintaining playground equipment and generally keeping the site tidy and safe is included in the role.

The contract includes 25 days paid holiday per year, which you will be expected to take during the school holidays. You will be eligible to join the KCC pension scheme.

Stone Bay School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and the successful candidate will be required to have a CRB enhanced disclosure, and two references prior to starting.

Please telephone, write or email for an application pack from the main school office. The closing date for applications is Friday 5th June 2009.

Kent County Council is an equal opportunities employer

JobsforKent.co.uk
The smart way to find a job in the County

Swale BOROUGH COUNCIL NORTH KENT COAST

Benefit Officer x 3

37 hours
£14,982 - £22,494 pa

We currently have vacancies for one permanent and two temporary Benefit Officers. The temporary posts will be offered as one year contracts.

Based at Sittingbourne, but sometimes working at one of our three district offices in Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheerness, the main responsibilities of this role will be to check, calculate and maintain Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claims and give face to face or telephone advice to the public on all matters relating to those benefits and also Council Tax account issues.

It is essential that you are either educated to GCSE standard at grade C including Maths and English, or an equivalent qualification such as NVQ level 2 in a subject area such as Business and Finance or Administration, or that you have at least 2 years' experience in a related area of work such as a customer service or financial administration environment, preferably within Housing Benefit or other Social Security Benefit role.

You must be able to show good computer keyboard skills and knowledge of Microsoft Office packages would be an advantage.

We are looking for people who have good communication and team working skills and the ability to learn quickly. A comprehensive training programme will be provided to develop your skills and knowledge.

The starting salary will be dependent upon qualifications and experience.

We welcome applications for flexible working arrangements.

In addition to salary, we can offer you a generous annual leave allowance, paid bank holidays, flexi time and the Local Government final salary pension scheme.

For further information contact Human Resources, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT. Telephone Sittingbourne (01795) 417414 (24 hour voice mail) quoting reference number 477CS1.

E-Mail: hr@swale.gov.uk Website: http://jobs.swale.gov.uk

Closing date: 26 May 2009
Interviews: w/c 8 June 2009

Find teaching jobs online

Register your details and we'll email you daily with new jobs that match your selected criteria

JobsforKent.co.uk
The smart way to find a job in the County
POWERED BY KOS MEDIA

Chichester college

Community Business Coaches

£19,500 - £25,000 per annum dependent on qualifications and experience.
Home based

Do you like helping people?
Do you know the community groups in Medway, Thanet or Shepway?

Chichester College has an exciting new project for the South East which is funded by SEEDA (South East England Development Agency) and co-financed by ESF (European Social Fund). The project will work with clients in the South East to support them in exploring their route to possible self-employment.

We are creating a regional team of Community Business Coaches and are looking to recruit three coaches in Kent. This is a fixed term contract initially for one year.

Closing Date: 28 May 2009

For more information and to apply, visit www.chichester.ac.uk/jobs
Alternatively, please call Human Resources on 01243 537687 or email: humanresources@chichester.ac.uk quoting HR2901C.

All posts are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check.
We are an equal opportunities employer.

SEEDA

Laleham Gap School

Laleham Gap caters for pupils from 3-16 and is the county's leading provision for pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties.

THE FOLLOWING STAFF ARE REQUIRED FOR SEPTEMBER 2009

Both Posts will be paid Kent Scheme 3 (£14099 – 15984 pro-rata)

TEMP 1:1 LSA

27.5 hours per week, term time only, between 8.50 am – 3.30 pm Monday – Friday. The role will be working flexibly across all subjects at our secondary school in Margate. An interest/flair for ICT would be an advantage.

RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKER (MATERNITY COVER)

To provide cover for up to one year for 35 hours plus 2 "sleep-in" duties per week during term time. Hours are primarily between 3 - 10 p.m. Duties include planning and supervising activities for groups of residential pupils, preparing some meals and on-call duties when doing sleep-ins. NVQ 3 in Care would be favourable.

We are also keen to speak with people who may be interested in any type of casual/relief work in the school.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the young people in its care and all posts are subject to an enhanced CRB disclosure.

Closing Date is Monday 1 June

Please send a LARGE SAE for an application pack to the address below clearly indicating which post you are interested in.

Debbie Terziyski, Laleham Gap School, Northdown Park Road, Margate CT9 2TP
E-mail: Debbie.terziyski@laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk

To advertise in this section
01303 817040

With campuses in Ashford, Folkestone and Dover, South Kent College offers a wide range of courses from Entry Level to Level 7 and caters for over 10,000 students of all ages. We currently have the following opportunities at our Ashford campus:

Technician (Ag, Plant, HGV and Welding) Ref: S2169

37 hours per week

Responsibilities include supporting the day-to-day running of the workshops, demonstrating the use of equipment, contributing to safe working practices and monitoring stock levels of all goods. NVQ Level 2 or equivalent in Construction Plant Engineering is essential, as well as a minimum of three years relevant experience in this field and experience of welding processes (Gas, MIG and ARC).

Lecturer – Beauty Therapy Ref: T1383

Variable hours, Fixed-term until 31st July 2010

You will teach across all courses on NVQ Levels 1 to 3, specialising in complimentary and alternative therapies such as reflexology as well as delivering Key Skills. NVQ Level 3 or equivalent in Beauty Therapy is essential, as is a minimum of three years recent and relevant industry experience.

The closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 29th May 2009.

For further information or an application pack please contact the Human Resources Department on 0845 207 8222 (24 hour answerphone), email: humanresources@southkent.ac.uk or visit www.southkent.ac.uk

All posts are subject to a disclosure check by the Criminal Records Bureau. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all employees to share this commitment. Applications are welcome from suitably qualified candidates regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexuality or religion.

SKC South Kent College
ASHFORD • DOVER • FOLKESTONE

CAREERS IN HEALTHCARE ACROSS EAST KENT

NHS
Eastern and Coastal Kent

From Whitstable to Dover, Ashford to Canterbury, over 710,000 people depend on Eastern and Coastal Kent NHS and we put them at the heart of everything we do. All our staff work hard every day to improve health and wellbeing for the local community, to tackle health inequalities and to provide high quality, responsive and efficient services, both directly and through commissioning.

As one of Kent's largest employers, we aim to employ and train a world-class workforce capable of meeting our many challenges. In return for your skills and commitment we offer wide-ranging staff benefits including real investment in personalised career development, flexible working, childcare, final salary pension scheme and in-house discounts, relocation packages, occupational sickness benefit, car scheme for eligible staff, occupational health service, and enhanced maternity pay.

Staff Nurse X3 (*)

Band 5: £20,710 - £26,839 per annum Ref: 767-EKB1104
Harty Ward, Sheppey Community Hospital

We are looking for an enthusiastic, motivated Staff Nurse to join our team providing care to GP admissions, Elderly Rehabilitation and Stroke patients on Harty/Minster Ward at Sheppey Community Hospital.

You will be working closely with the multi-disciplinary team for the benefit of patient focused care; we are a lively nursing team and work in partnership to ensure that our medical, rehabilitation and stroke patients are provided with high quality care and effective discharge into the appropriate settings.

If you have experience of working within these areas and are highly motivated with good communication skills then come and join our nursing team. You will need to demonstrate effective leadership qualities and welcome the challenge of providing support and some training to other members of the team. Training and development are extremely important to us.

For an informal discussion or visit, please contact Sr. Beryl Simmons, Matron Manager, Harty Ward, Tel: (01795) 879108.

Completed applications by: 28 May 2009.

A comprehensive corporate induction programme is provided at the commencement of employment.

Please ensure that you check your NHS Jobs account regularly in order to see if you have been successful in obtaining an interview.

(*) Employment in this post is subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau

(🚗) Car owner/driver essential, subject to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)

For further information and to apply, please visit
www.easternandcoastalkent.nhs.uk

We are an equal opportunities employer committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

The Royal School of Military Engineering, Chatham

Exciting opportunities for 2009

MKC Training Services Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of MidKent College, delivers the trade, technical and professional training for the Royal Engineers at Brompton Barracks. This 30 year contract was awarded in 2008 and following a review we now require a number of new staff to join us in this exciting venture.

Health & Safety Officer *c£31k*

This is a new post to establish practices and processes across the site where MKC Training Services operate. The role will include Environmental and Fire responsibilities. Candidates should hold a current NEBOSH Certificate and have up to date knowledge and understanding of H&S Legislation and practice.

Heating & Plumbing Instructor *£28 - £30k*

Following promotion we are looking for a qualified and experienced trade's person to teach young soldiers the H&P trade. You will be confident and knowledgeable about your trade and able to communicate your experience through practical demonstration and theory. Previous teaching experience is not important as you will receive training and be supported to gain appropriate qualifications.

Training Design Analyst/Examiner *c£33k*

You will be able to demonstrate experience and appropriate qualifications gained within a Course Design career and are looking for the opportunity to join an established team developing Construction and Engineering courses for a range of trade and technical disciplines within an MOD/Military environment

Job Descriptions and Application forms can be found at www.midkent.ac.uk (follow RSME vacancies)

Please forward completed applications to ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk and/or call Ken Pullan on 07725 128661 for an informal discussion on any of these positions.

Closing date: 1st June 2009

The College is committed to Equal Opportunities and to selection on merit. It welcomes applications from all sections of society. We particularly welcome and encourage applications from under represented groups including black, minority ethnic and disabled people.

MKC Training Services is an equal opportunities employer

MKC Training Services Limited
at The Royal School of Military Engineering

Kent County Council

Have you ever considered working in Kent? Known as the garden of England for good reason, with its beautiful, historic and varied landscapes, idyllic villages and diverse towns, Kent has a lot to offer. On the doorstep of mainland Europe you are only 45 minutes away from enjoying a coffee and croissant in France, or of course popping into London to catch a show!

With over 6700km of public rights of way, Kent County Council manages the largest network in the country. It also has an excellent national reputation in service delivery and forward thinking, dynamic new initiatives.

Public Rights of Way Officer (Enforcement)

£20,262 - £30,219 (Salary dependent on experience and progression through the Career Grade is based on the fulfilment of required competencies)
Initially on a two year fixed term contract
Maidstone

Joining our Public Rights of Way Team, you will have considerable proven experience of Public Rights of Way or enforcement along with the ability to apply that experience in a pragmatic way to a range of challenging situations. You will be able to investigate reported breaches, prepare case papers and present evidence in Court to the highest standard; and be able to develop similar skills in those around you.

Communicating the requirements of the law effectively to a diverse range of groups with the intention of reducing the number of offences being reported is also required.

With your excellent organisation and communication skills, you will juggle numerous competing priorities and adapt readily to the use of new technology.

You will be a team player, with either considerable proven experience of working within PROW or enforcement or be educated to HND or degree level in a related subject. **Ref: ER/09/0040**

Public Rights of Way Officer (Asset Management Delivery):

Starting salary £20,262
1 year fixed term appointment with possible extension subject to funding
West Malling

The Countryside Access Service is looking for a new officer to join them to deliver capital maintenance programmes across the county. A substantial proportion of the network sits within the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

You will be joining a busy West Kent PROW Team, and will prepare and supervise programmes of capital works. Working closely with landowners, local councils and other agencies to secure all necessary consents and permissions, the post carries a high-volume workload so you will need to be able to juggle numerous competing priorities and adapt readily to the use of new technology.

A team player, and competent to NVQ3 level in civil engineering/ contract management/ estate management, you will be able to demonstrate the same level of competency in a similar related area. The post also requires a high level of motivation, a good knowledge of rights of way law and practice and excellent organisational and communication skills. **Ref: ER/09/0041**

These posts are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure Application to the Criminal Records Bureau.

For more information on the posts above call Graham Rusling 01622 696995.

To apply, visit www.kent.gov.uk/jobs Alternatively, please email recruitment.line@kent.gov.uk or call 0845 8247 904. Please quote the appropriate reference number

Closing date: Midday, 4th June 2009.

A great place to work.
Our services aren't the same, it neither are our people.

www.kent.gov.uk/jobs

Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School
Maidstone Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 3EL
Tel: 01634 844008
email: harrisonj@sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk

A Voluntary Controlled School specialising in Mathematics, Computing and Humanities
An 11-18 Boys' Grammar School of 1180 students including 300 in the co-educational Sixth Form
'OUTSTANDING' Ofsted November 2008 –
"a buzz of excitement pervades the school"

Teacher of Spanish and French

An enthusiastic teacher is required to cover maternity leave from 1st September 2009. The Modern Languages department enjoys a newly equipped language laboratory and run trips to Spain and France on an annual basis. The school is twinned with Lycee St Marc near Bourgoin, and has e-mail links with schools in Spain.

The successful candidate will be an effective classroom practitioner and be committed to enabling all students to achieve their full potential

OFSTED 2008 commented that students have a "willingness to participate in the wide range of opportunities available to them, to show initiative and to assume responsibility". Behaviour was found to be "exemplary".

If you are interested in applying for this post, then please contact the Headteacher's PA, Mrs Jacqueline Harrison, or visit out website www.sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk

We are committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check

Closing date for applications – 20th May 2009

To advertise in this section
01303 817040

WALMER SCIENCE COLLEGE
Salisbury Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent, CT14 7QJ
Telephone : 01304 375212 Fax : 01304 380766
e-mail : admin@walmersciencecollege.co.uk
Headteacher : Simon Heaton BSc (Hons), NPQH.

MIXED 11-18 HIGH SCHOOL 789 ON ROLL

REQUIRED FOR 1st SEPTEMBER 2009

TEACHER OF SCIENCE (MPS)

The post would be suitable for either NQTs or more experienced teachers. A comprehensive induction programme will be offered whatever your status.

The successful applicant will:-

- be a creative teacher with the ability to motivate students of all abilities;
- be enthusiastic and energetic;
- have a commitment to raising standards;
- have a commitment to providing a first class learning experience for all our students.

Walmer Science College is a good school with outstanding features (Ofsted 2007)

Walmer Science College is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and the successful applicant will be required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure via the CRB. For an application form and further details, please contact Mrs Windsor at the school.

Closing date : 19th May 2009

We value diversity in our workforce
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE
Kent County Council

Find a job online

JobsforKent.co.uk

The smart way to find a job in the County

CLASSIC EDUCATION

Is one of Kent's leading education recruitment agencies

TEACHERS

Required now for supply and long term work in your local area

EXCELLENT DAILY RATE

Call for an immediate interview

01474 359333

Or E-mail; office@classiceducation.co.uk

www.classiceducation.co.uk

A Kent based company you can rely on

JobsforKent.co.uk

A selection of the 100s of Local Jobs online

Accountancy

Credit Controller

Ashford
Salary: TBA
Keel Toys Ltd are one of the leading designers and distributors of quality soft toys in Europe with an extensive blue chip customer base. We currently have the following position available. Credit Controller Full time 37.5 hours 9 months maternity leave. The successful applicant will be working within a small accounts team, responsible for monitoring customer's accounts and actively pursuing the recovery of debts for the company. Ideally, candidates should have previous experience of working within an accounts office. This is a challenging role requiring excellent communication skills and self-motivation. Good working knowledge of excel and word would be an advantage. In return you will receive a competitive salary and other company benefits. Please apply in the first instance by sending your CV including your current salary details. Julian Drage - Head of Finance Keel Toys Ltd Ashford Business park, Servington, Ashford, Kent TN 24 0SG Tel: 01233 506363 or email.
To apply/more information: Keel Toys
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01233 506363
Email julian.drage@keeltoys.com

ACCOUNTS PERSON

Ashford
Salary: TBA
Busy, friendly office requires an experienced Purchase Ledger Clerk Sage Line 50 essential. Customer credit control/reconciliation of supplier accounts Also flexible approach to assist with general office procedures. Rural location - own transport essential Contact with CV: e-mail enquiries@colsan.com Phone: 01233 860760.
To apply/more information: Colsan Instrument Services
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01233 860760
Email enquiries@colsan.com

Finance Assistant

Sevenoaks
Salary: TBA
22.5 hours per week. For application and job description Tel: 01732 459953 Email:council@ sevenoakstown.gov.uk www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk
To apply/more information: Sevenoaks Town Council
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 459953
Email council@ sevenoakstown.gov.uk

Administration, Secretarial, PA

Benefit Officer x 3

Isle of Sheppey
Salary: £14,982 - £22,494 pa
Closing Date: 26 May 2009
37 hours. We currently have vacancies for one permanent and two temporary Benefit Officers. The temporary posts will be offered as one year contracts. Based at Sittingbourne, but sometimes working at one of our three district offices in Sittingbourne, Faversham and Sheerness, the main responsibilities of this role will be to check, calculate and maintain Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claims and give face to face or telephone advice to the public on all matters relating to those benefits and also Council Tax account issues. It is essential that you are either educated to GCSE standard at grade C including Maths and English, or an equivalent qualification such as NVQ level 2 in a subject area such as Business and Finance or Administration, or that you have at least 2 years' experience in a related area of work such as a customer service or financial administration environment, preferably within Housing Benefit or other Social Security Benefit role. You must be able to show good computer keyboard skills and knowledge of Microsoft Office packages would be an advantage. We are looking for people who have good communication and team working skills and the ability to learn quickly. A comprehensive training programme will be provided to develop your skills and knowledge. The starting salary will be dependent upon qualifications and experience. We welcome applications for flexible working arrangements. In addition to salary, we can offer you a generous annual leave allowance, paid bank holidays, flexi time and the Local Government final salary pension scheme. For further information contact Human Resources, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT. Telephone Sittingbourne (01795) 417414 (24 hour voice mail) quoting reference number 477CS1. E-Mail: hr@swale.gov.uk Website: http://jobs. swale.gov.uk Interviews: w/c 8 June 2009.
To apply/more information: Swale Borough Council
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01795 417414
Email hr@swale.gov.uk

Part time Receptionist/ Administrator

Tonbridge
Salary: TBA
Required to undertake various duties on a split shift basis at our busy dealership. We require a good organiser with strong inter-personal skills, pc literate with keyboard skills, excellent communication and the ability to manage own workload. This post would suit a mature, experienced person looking for flexible hours. For an immediate interview please send your CV to Greg Wilcox, Franchise Manager.
To apply/more information: Harwoods Landrover (Tonbridge) Vale Rise, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1TB
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 353637
Email gwilcox@harwoods.uk.com

Personal Assistant to the Principal and Chief Executive

Medway
Salary: Circa £30 - £35k
Demanding, exciting and rewarding! If this is the type of career you are looking for, then please continue MidKent College is moving into an exciting phase in the history of the College with the relocation from the Horsted and City Way campuses to a stunning new £86m new build located at Lower Lines, Chatham in September this year. Combining this move with the recent award of the Public Private Partnership contract for the Royal School of Military Engineering at Brompton Barracks and the planned development of the existing Maidstone campus, it is a hectic time for the College. MidKent College now has an annual turnover of £45m, a staff of over 1,000 and trains around 12,000 students and 3,000 soldiers each year. The ideal candidate will therefore be joining during a period of significant change with the opportunity to develop your career within this stimulating environment. You will already have direct experience of working for a senior manager and be fully familiar with the demands and rewards of working at this level. Reporting directly for and supporting the Principal and Chief Executive, you will hold a position of responsibility, developing strong working relationships with the Directors, Senior Leadership Team, Governors and external Stakeholders involved across the MidKent College Group. Interested: Please forward your CV to ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk or call him on 07725 128661 (after 12th May) for an informal discussion. A full Job Description/Person Specification and application can be seen at www.midkent.ac.uk. £30 - £35k plus final salary pension, generous leave and benefits.
To apply/more information: Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 07725 128661
Email ken.pullan@midkent.ac.uk

Finding staff
24-7
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Finance Assistant

Sevenoaks
Salary: TBA
For application and job description Tel: 01732 459953 Email: council@ sevenoakstown. gov.uk www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk
To apply/more information: Sevenoaks Town Council
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 459953
Email council@ sevenoakstown.gov.uk

Committee clerk/ Secretary

Sevenoaks
Salary: TBA
For application and job description Tel: 01732 459953 Email:council@ sevenoakstown.gov.uk www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk
To apply/more information: Sevenoaks Town Council
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 459953
Email council@ sevenoakstown.gov.uk

Planning Cttee Clerk/ Secretary

Sevenoaks
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 29 May 2009
Experienced Planning Cttee Clerk/ Secretary - 1 year fixed contract (full time + some evening mtgs) Closing date: For application and job description Tel: 01732 459953 Email:council@ sevenoakstown.gov.uk www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk
To apply/more information: Sevenoaks Town Council
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 459953
Email council@ sevenoakstown.gov.uk

Catering, Hospitality

EXPERIENCED WAITSTAFF AND CHEFS

Thanet
Salary: TBA
For the best restaurant in Thanet. Hard working, dedicated, experienced applicants only need apply. Please contact: Harriet on 01843 851515 Or email: harrietleigh@gmail.com
To apply/more information: Age & Sons
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01843 851515
Email harrietleigh@gmail.com

CATERING ASSISTANT

Faversham
Salary: TBA
PART-TIME CATERING ASSISTANT REQUIRED At THE WHITE LION, SELLING, NR FAVERSHAM SALARY NEGOTIABLE DEPENDING ON EXPERIENCE CONTACT ISAURA ON 01227-752211
To apply/more information: White Lion
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227-752211
Email applications@kosmedia.co.uk

Kitchen Assistant

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
36 + hours per week. For more information call Maralyn - Tel: 01227 721527 Email: cares@ littlebournecarehome.co.uk
To apply/more information: Littlebourne House
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 721527
Email cares@ littlebournecarehome.co.uk

Midday Meal Supervisors

Ashford
Salary: £2876 per annum
Closing Date: Wednesday 3rd June
Five Acre Wood School is looking for Midday Meal Supervisors to join our friendly school located on sites at Boughton Lane, Maidstone and Aylesford School Sports College. The hours will be 11:30 to 1:30 each weekday, term time only. Starting salary will be Kent Scale Band 2 Point 4 - £2876 per annum. This job will be subject to satisfactory references and an enhanced CRB Please contact the school for an application pack by 25th May. Interviews will be held on Wednesday 10th June. Five Acre Wood and all its personnel are committed to safeguarding children and young people.
To apply/more information: Five Acre Wood Special School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 743925
Email office@ five-acre.kent.sch.uk

WEEKEND COOK

Romney Marsh
Salary: £7.77 per hr 8am - 2pm Saturday and Sunday £7.77 per hr. (£93.24 per week-end) Gross. To join our team caring for young people with disabilities. Rewarding and friendly environment. Tel: 01303 872289. For more information and application form. All applicants will be required to complete a criminal records bureau check.
To apply/more information: Bethany Lodge
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 872289
Email applications@kosmedia.co.uk

House Manager

Romney Marsh
Salary: TBA
Littlestone is a traditional private members club and enjoys one of the finest links courses in the south of England. The provision of the best possible bar, catering and functions service for members and guest alike is of paramount importance. This is an opportunity for a strong leader with a background in ensuring excellent customer service with consistently high standards in food and beverage operations. The ability to work on your own initiative and interact well with members and motivate a small staff team is vital.The role includes liaison with suppliers, co-ordinating functions, achieving sales and profit targets and you will provide a strong front of house presence. Attractive salary. Applications in writing to The General Manager, Littlestone Golf Club, St Andrews Road, Littlestone, Kent TN28 8RB. Or email secretary@ littlestonegolfclub.org.uk
To apply/more information: Littlestone Golf Club
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email secretary@ littlestonegolfclub.org.uk

Cook

Romney Marsh
Salary: TBA
We manage two club house catering operations and require an experienced cook to work in both, based at the Warren but also assisting with functions at Littlestone. No split shifts and hours by arrangement. Applications in writing to The General Manager, Littlestone Golf Club, St Andrews Road, Littlestone, Kent TN28 8RB. Or email secretary@ littlestonegolfclub.org.uk
To apply/more information: Littlestone Golf Club
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email secretary@ littlestonegolfclub.org.uk

Domestic

Cleaners

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
For more information call Maralyn - Tel: 01227 721527 Email: cares@ littlebournecarehome.co.uk
To apply/more information: Littlebourne House
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 721527
Email cares@ littlebournecarehome.co.uk

Domestic Trades

MULTI-TRADE SKILLED OPERATIVES

Dartford
Salary: TBA
OPEN DAYS - FRIDAY 8TH /15TH & 22ND MAY 12pm to 5pm At Regent Development Ltd., Unit D4, Riverside Way, Dartford Kent DA1 5BS Regent Development Ltd is a BUSY chartered building company acting as a service provider to most major insurance companies. All work is local to our office in Dartford. We now require Self-employed Multi-skilled personnel with at least the following skills: Plastering AND wall papering AND painting/ decorating. Applicants are required to have a CIS/UTR number/ Public Liability insurance/ current driving licence/insured van/good communication skills and previous experience within the insurance industry would be advantageous (bring documents with you to open afternoon). Either attend the open afternoons or apply now - email: nikki.pipe@ regentgroup.co.uk or Tel: 01322 626249.
To apply/more information: Regent Development Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: KOS.3
Tel: 01322 626249
Email nikki.pipe@regentgroup.co.uk

LEARNING MENTOR

Gravesend
Salary: £15,586 - £17,098
Closing Date: 19 May 2009
For Years 12 & 13 KS6 Pts 17-20 £18,471- £20,262 (pro-rata) £15,586 - £17,098 (actual) 37 hours per week / Term Time Only + 5 days (39 weeks). We are seeking a Learning Mentor to support students in reaching their full potential. Applicants will need to have a good relationship with students and an understanding of the issues that hinder learning. Strong communication skills to work with individuals, groups, teachers, families and carers will be needed. Saint George's C of E School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All appointments are subject to List 99 and enhanced CRB checks. Contact us to request further details and an application form. Meadow Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 7LS Tel: 01474 533082 Email dhariwalj@saintgeorgescofe.k ent.sch.uk or visit our website www.saintgeorgescofe.kent. sch.uk.
To apply/more information: St George's CoE School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01474 533082
Email dhariwalj@ saintgeorgescofe.kent.sch.uk

TEACHER OF MATHEMATICS

Gravesend
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Monday 18 May 2009
Maternity Cover - September 2009 Main Professional Grade We are looking for a well-qualified and enthusiastic Teacher of Mathematics to join a highly successful Faculty. The person appointed would be required to teach up to A' Level. Maths is a very popular option with students and a high proportion go on to study a Mathematical course in Higher Education. The person appointed will receive high quality mentoring and support. The Faculty enjoys excellent facilities and equipment. We have been a Specialist Science College since September 2004; this has led to a broad range of innovative practice across the school and we are looking to develop cross-curricular projects involving Mathematics. The School has a high profile for achievement locally and nationally and prides itself on a strong record of internal professional development including a full induction in the Summer term. The School is also an Investor in People and an Investor in Careers. Application forms and further details are available from the Headteacher's Personal Assistant, Mrs M Tong Ralphs. Completed forms should be returned by post, fax or email for the attention of Mrs E Wilson, Headteacher no later than Monday 18th May 2009 Gravesend Grammar School for Girls A Specialist Science College Pelham Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0JE Telephone: 01474 352896 Fax: 01474 331195 Website:www.ggsg.org.uk email: enquiries @ggsg.org.uk This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
To apply/more information: Gravesend Grammar School for Girl
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01474 352896
Email enquiries @ggsg.org.uk

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TEACHER OF ENGLISH

Folkestone
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Monday 18 May at 5pm
TEACHER OF ENGLISH (KS4 Coordinator) TLR 2B (currently £3,940) An enthusiastic and dynamic qualified teacher of English is required to join our thriving and successful team. The Folkestone Academy is about to embark on an exciting journey towards becoming Kent's first All Age Academy with students from age 4 - 19. We are seeking an ambitious teacher with the energy and drive to support the leadership of the English team taking responsibility for Key Stage 4. This is an ideal opportunity for a well qualified teacher to gain experience for future faculty leadership. Full details and an application form are available on our website www.folkestoneacademy.com Alternatively, telephone Sally Taylor on 01303 842400 Closing date: Monday 18 May at 5pm Interviews: Friday 22 May. The Folkestone Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.
To apply/more information: The Folkestone Academy
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 842400
Email admin@ folkestoneacademy.com

Teacher of Spanish and French

Medway
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 20th May 2009
An enthusiastic teacher is required to cover maternity leave from 1st September 2009. The Modern Languages department enjoys a newly equipped language laboratory and run trips to Spain and France on an annual basis. The school is twinned with Lycee St Marc near Bourgoin, and has e-mail links with schools in Spain. The successful candidate will be an effective classroom practitioner and be committed to enabling all students to achieve their full potential OFSTED 2008 commented that students have a "willingness to participate in the wide range of opportunities available to them, to show initiative and to assume responsibility". Behaviour was found to be "exemplary". If you are interested in applying for this post, then please contact the Headteacher's PA, Mrs Jacqueline Harrison, Maidstone Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 3EL Tel: 01634 844008 email: office@sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk or visit out website www.sirjosephwilliamson.medway.sch.uk. We are committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check.
To apply/more information: Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 844008
Email office@sirjoseph williamson.medway.sch.uk

TEMP 1:1 LSA

Margate
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Monday 1 June
27.5 hours per week, term time only, between 8.50 am - 3.30 pm Monday - Friday. The role will be working flexibly across all subjects at our secondary school in Margate. An interest/flair for ICT would be an advantage. We are also keen to speak with people who may be interested in any type of casual/relief work in the school. The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the young people in its care and all posts are subject to an enhanced CRB disclosure.

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Please send a LARGE SAE for an application pack to the address below clearly indicating which post you are interested in. Debbie Terziyski, Laleham Gap School, Northdown Park Road, Margate CT9 2TP E-mail: Debbie.terziyski@laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk.
To apply/more information: Laleham Gap School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email Debbie.terziyski@laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk

RESIDENTIAL CARE WORKER

Margate
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Monday 1 June MATERNITY COVER To provide cover for up to one year for 35 hours plus 2 "sleep-in" duties per week during term time. Hours are primarily between 3 - 10 p.m. Duties include planning and supervising activities for groups of residential pupils, preparing some meals, and on-call duties when doing sleep-ins. NVQ 3 in Care would be favourable. We are also keen to speak with people who may be interested in any type of casual/relief work in the school. The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the young people in its care and all posts are subject to an enhanced CRB disclosure. Closing Date is Monday 1 June Please send a LARGE SAE for an application pack to the address below clearly indicating which post you are interested in. Debbie Terziyski, Laleham Gap School, Northdown Park Road, Margate CT9 2TP E-mail: Debbie.terziyski@laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk
To apply/more information: Laleham Gap School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email Debbie.terziyski@laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk

TEACHER OF ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Folkestone
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: Monday 18 May at 5pm
Required for September 2009 MPS A specialist teacher of Additional Educational Needs is required to join our successful team, working with students with specific learning difficulties and ASD across the Key Stages both individually and in small groups. This is an exciting time to join the department as we move towards becoming an All Age Academy. A commitment to the ethos of inclusion is essential. You will have the ability to establish strong working relationships with young people and colleagues and will bring enthusiasm and mew ideas to the classroom to make learning fun and engaging. Full details and an application form are available on our website www.folkestoneacademy.com Alternatively, telephone Sally Taylor on 01303 842400 Closing date: Monday 18 May at 5pm Interviews: Friday 22 May The Folkestone Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check. The Folkestone Academy, Academy Lane, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5FP • Tel: 01303 842400 Email: admin@folkestoneacademy.com
To apply/more information: The Folkestone Academy
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 842400
Email admin@folkestoneacademy.com

Supply Lecturers (Teachers) - Various

Canterbury
Salary: £18,387 - £26,363 pro rata PA
Closing Date: 26th May 2009 Supply Lecturers required in the following areas - Theatre Stage Craft (Technical Design) - Scenic Design & Construction - Prop Making - Stage Management - Lighting Design - Costume Design & Construction Canterbury College is a Further and Higher Education College in the heart of Kent. Our goal is to be one of the best FE Colleges in England by 2010. We have 9,000 students across 300 courses and enjoy an enviable reputation as a great place to learn. Our brand new £50M campus is also home to nearly 800 staff and we have some great career opportunities which may be right for you. Staff benefits include: Pensions and Life Assurance Scheme Proximity to Main Bus & Train stations Close to City Centre Sports Hall and Gym Generous Holiday Allowance Staff Discount Scheme. For an application pack, please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24hr answer phone) quoting the post reference.
To apply/more information: Human Resources Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: S/PA
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

Higher Education Curriculum Development Officer

Canterbury
Salary: Starting at £33,858 per annum
Closing Date: 26th May 2009 37 Hours per week Canterbury College is a Further and Higher Education College in the heart of Kent. Our goal is to be one of the best FE Colleges in England by 2010. We have 9,000 students across 300 courses and enjoy an enviable reputation as a great place to learn. Our brand new £50M campus is also home to nearly 800 staff and we have some great career opportunities which may be right for you. Staff benefits include: Pensions and Life Assurance Scheme Proximity to Main Bus & Train stations. Close to City Centre Sports Hall and Gym Generous Holiday Allowance Staff Discount Scheme. For an application pack, please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282 (24hr answer phone) quoting the post reference
To apply/more information: Human Resources Canterbury College
Quoting Job Ref: CDO/HE
Tel: 01227 811282
Email applications@jobsforkent.co.uk

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Medway
Salary: £14,891 - £18,937 to join and enhance our large and expanding, high calibre team. Medway Scale, Grade D2 £14,891 - £18,937 (pay award pending) + SEN Allowance (£1,162). Are you committed, motivated and enthusiastic? Does 'Every Child Matter' to you? Can you make a difference? If so, share your talents and expertise with us. Abbey Court is located on 2 sites; Rainham (Primary) and Strood (Secondary and Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 4-19 with severe learning difficulties. Working hours are 32.5 p/w, term time only. Previous experience and/or NNEB (or equivalent) qualifications preferred. Comprehensive training and induction will be provided. This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure. For an application pack, please write to/telephone (stating the role for which you are applying): Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent. ME2 3SP (01634 338224). Please note CV's will not be accepted.
To apply/more information: Abbey Court School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 338224
Email tayllo36@medway.org.uk

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Teacher of Mathematics

Deal
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 19th May 2009 REQUIRED FOR 1st SEPTEMBER 2009 This could either be a full-time post or 0.6 FTE (MPS – R&R ALLOWANCE FOR SUITABLE CANDIDATE) POSSIBILITY OF 2 I/C FOR SUITABLE CANDIDATE The post would be suitable for either NQTs or more experienced teachers. A comprehensive induction programme will be offered whatever your status. The successful applicant will:- • be a creative teacher with the ability to motivate students of all abilities; • be enthusiastic and energetic; • have a commitment to raising standards; • have a commitment to providing a first class learning experience for all our students. Walmer Science College is a good school with outstanding features (Ofsted 2007) Walmer Science College is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and the successful applicant will be required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure via the CRB. For an application form and further details, please contact Mrs Windsor at the school. Salisbury Road,Walmer, Deal, Kent, CT14 7QJ Telephone : 01304 375212 Fax: 01304 380766 e-mail : admin@walmersciencecollege.co.uk.
To apply/more information: Walmer Science College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01304 375212
Email admin@walmersciencecollege.co.uk

TEACHER OF SCIENCE

Deal
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 19th May 2009 The post would be suitable for either NQTs or more experienced teachers. A comprehensive induction programme will be offered whatever your status. The successful applicant will:- • be a creative teacher with the ability to motivate students of all abilities; • be enthusiastic and energetic; • have a commitment to raising standards; • have a commitment to providing a first class learning experience for all our students. Walmer Science College is a good school with outstanding features (Ofsted 2007). Walmer Science College is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and the successful applicant will be required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure via the CRB. For an application form and further details, please contact Mrs Windsor at the school. Salisbury Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent, CT14 7QJ Telephone : 01304 375212. Fax : 01304 380766 e-mail : admin@walmersciencecollege.co.uk
To apply/more information: Walmer Science College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01304 375212
Email admin@walmersciencecollege.co.uk

Learning Support Assistant

Sittingbourne
Salary: £10,000
Learning Support Assistant Required This position is currently temporary with a possible permanent placement for September. Hythe House Education is a small independent secondary school based in Sheerness Kent. The pupils range in ability and can show challenging behaviour. We are seeking an individual who can demonstrate enthusiasm and resourcefulness working within a small established staff team. The ideal candidate will demonstrate a firm but fair approach and be able to contribute to the existing good practices of the school. The yearly salary for the position is £10,000 for term time only, hours are 8.45 - 3.15 per day. For an application pack or further details please contact: Hythe House Education (01795) 581006 Or E-Mail: robertduffy@hythehousesupport.co.uk
To apply/more information: Hythe House Support
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01795 581006
Email robertduffy@hythehousesupport.co.uk

Engineering, Manufacturing, Utilities

GENERAL MECHNICAL ENGINEER

Ashford
Salary: TBA
Woodchurch Electrical experience would be an advantage Salary: negotiable Hours: TBA. Contract: e-mail enquiries@colsan.com. Phone: 01233 860760
To apply/more information: Colsan Instrument Services
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01233 860760
Email enquiries@colsan.com

Senior Electrical Building Services Design Engineer

Ashford
Salary: TBA
A senior electrical design engineer is required to take up a position in this small consulting engineering practice based in Ashford, Kent. The ideal applicant will be experienced in all aspects of the electrical consulting design process from conception to completion and be competent using both CAD and industry standard electrical design software. Applications should be made in writing in the first instance including an up to date CV to:- Mr. S Nixon Steven Nixon Associates, 1 Caxton House, Wellesley Road, Ashford, Kent TN24 8ET.
To apply/more information: Steven Nixon Associates
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email applications@kosmedia.co.uk

Estate Agency, Property

Negotiator - Surveyor

Maidstone
Salary: TBA
Require good all rounder for a busy general practice agency For more information call Norman Coles on 01622 763322 or Send you Applications with CV to Coles & Co 76 Kings Street, Maidstone, ME14 1BH.
To apply/more information: Coles & Co
Quoting Job Ref: TBA
Tel: 01622 763322
Email NGA.coles@btinternet.com

Graduate, Trainees

Engineering Apprentices

Medway
Salary: TBA
At IPS International we take training seriously, which is why we have been awarded Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status in Advanced Maintenance Engineering. We train engineering apprentices for Major Companies in Kent and deliver other training and NVQ's throughout the UK. We are helping these Major Employers in Kent to recruit, and will be holding aptitude testing sessions in Rochester for Engineering Apprentices Electrical, Mechanical and Instrumentation Manufacturing and Production Are you considering an Engineering Apprenticeship to enable you to Earn as You Learn? If you are aged between 16 - 25 and have or expect to gain 4 GCSE's at grade C or above or equivalent, including Maths, English and Science please send your CV to Kim Hollands, IPS International kimhollands@ips-international.com
To apply/more information: IPS International Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email kimhollands@ips-international.com

HR, Recruitment

Community Business Coaches

Kent
Salary: £19,500 - £25,000 per annum
Closing Date: 28 May 2009 Home based Do you like helping people? Do you know the community groups in Medway, Thanet or Shepway? Chichester College has an exciting new project for the South East which is funded by SEEDA (South East England Development Agency) and co-financed by ESF (European Social Fund). The project will work with clients in the South East to support them in exploring their route to possible self-employment. We are creating a regional team of Community Business Coaches and are looking to recruit three coaches in Kent. This is a fixed term contract initially for one year. For more information and to apply, visit www.chichester.ac.uk/jobs Alternatively, please call Human Resources on 01243 537687 or email: humanresources@chichester.ac.uk quoting HR2901C. All posts are subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check. We are an equal opportunities employer.
To apply/more information: Chichester College
Quoting Job Ref: HR2901C
Tel: 01243 537687
Email humanresources@chichester.ac.uk

Industrial, Warehouse, Factory

Packer

Dartford
Salary: TBA
Packer required for Northfleet based company. Full time Mon-Frid no previous experience required as full training will be given. Apply to keith.hurdle@ tube-gear.com. Or in writing Tube Gear Ltd Unit B1 Springhead enterprise park Springhead road Northfleet Kent DA11 8HB.
To apply/more information: Tube Gear Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email keith.hurdle@tube-gear.com

Marketing, Advertising

PUBLIC RELATIONS SENIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Maidstone
Salary: TBA
2 Albion Place Maidstone Kent ME14 5DY www.adamscreative.co.uk (MATERNITY LEAVE COVER) We are looking for an experienced PR professional with excellent writing and client-facing skills, able to work to tight deadlines as well as having great organisational abilities and bundles of enthusiasm and creativity. Some experience in event management would be an asset. Please send your CV and salary required to Lesley Farnbrough at Adams Creative. lesley@adamscreative.co.uk
To apply/more information: Adams Creative
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email lesley@adamscreative.co.uk

MARKETING AND SALES ASSISTANT

Maidstone
Salary: TBA
2 Albion Place Maidstone Kent ME14 5DY www.adamscreative.co.uk MARKETING AND SALES ASSISTANT We are looking for an organised, well presented team player with strong communication skills to support our fast paced business development team. You will be highly conscientious and motivated with a 'can do' attitude. Experience in telemarketing and lead generation is essential. Please send your CV and salary required to Becky Lander at Adams Creative. becky@adamscreative.co.uk
To apply/more information: Adams Creative
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email becky@adamscreative.co.uk

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Motor Trade, Driver

Meals Delivery Driver

Canterbury
Salary: TBA
Meals Delivery Driver Required, 5 days over 7, 11am-1.30pm will include some weekends and will involve some kitchen tasks. Extra hours may be available to the right applicant if required. A full clean driving license is essential. Please apply by e-mail to carol@chivescaterers. co.uk. or in writing Chives the Caterers, Whitgift Court, Fisher Road, Canterbury, CT2 8JJ
To apply/more information: Chivers Catering Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email carol@chivescaterers.co.uk

Not for profit, Charities

Project Manger

Canterbury
Salary: £22,500 pro rata We are a creative charity that brings people together and promotes kindness. We are looking for someone with enthusiasm, people-skills and commitment to help build our innovative organisation. The Project Manager will take responsibility for our exciting new community project in Herne Bay, Kent as well as being involved in many aspects of the charity. Salary - pro rata £22,500 / initially 3 days part-time (flexible) For more information see www.peopleunited.org.uk, email info@ peopleunited.org.uk or contact Tom Andrews on 01227 470973. Closing date for applications 26 May (noon).
To apply/more information: People United
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 470973
Email info@peopleunited.org.uk

Nursing, Medicine, Care Work

Foster Carers

Sittingbourne
Salary: TBA
• CAN YOU PROVIDE A SAFE AND CARING HOME FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN? • ARE YOU AN EXPERIENCED CARER LOOKING FOR A NEW CHALLENGE OR CHANGE? BENECARE OFFERS • EXCELLENT RATES OF PAY • REAL SUPPORT AND RESPITE SYSTEMS FOR CARERS • EXCELLENT TRAINING AND GUIDANCE FROM OUR QUALIFIED AND VERY EXPERIENCED TEAM We would love to hear from you if you are interested or involved in Fostering and would like additional information. Please contact…. 01227 362510 or Email info@ benecarefostering.co.uk Web www.benecarefostering.co.uk
To apply/more information: Bene Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 362510
Email info@benecarefostering.co.uk

Victim Liaison Officer

Gravesend
Salary: £19,500 p a
To work within the Tonbridge & Gravesend, Youth Offending Teams, helping young offenders and victims of their crime. Own car essential, excellent communication and organisational skills for application pack contact: West Kent Mediation. e-mail: theoffice@wkm.ork.uk. Tel: 01322 615774
To apply/more information: West Kent Mediation Service
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01322 615774
Email theoffice@wkm.org.uk

Community Support Workers

Dover
Salary: £12856.61 - £17421.40
Closing Date: 22/05/09 Community Support Workers - Dover and Canterbury Districts Salary £12856.61 - £17421.40 per annum subject to qualifications and experience Full and Part Time Posts available. We are seeking focussed and organised individuals to support people with Learning Disabilities to develop; services, personal skills and access their community resources. Successful applicants will demonstrate knowledge and application of Personalised services and the flexibility to support people with a wide range of skills

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and abilities. Applicants will work at times requested by the people they support, are expected to follow Person Centered approaches and adhere to the guidelines set out in Valuing People Now. Full support and training will be available. These posts are subject to Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks. Being holders of the Positive about Disabled People award, disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria will be offered an interview in every circumstance. The closing date is 22nd May 2009. Applications must be via application form. For further information or to request an application form please contact: Lynda Salisbury Office Co-ordinator. 01843 224482.
To apply/more information: Lynda Salisbury
East Kent Mencap
Quoting Job Ref: CSW0002
Tel: 01843-224482
Email Lynda.Salisbury@eastkentmencap.co.uk

Community Support Workers
Canterbury
Salary: £12856.61 - £17421.40
Closing Date: 22/05/09
Community Support Workers - Dover and Canterbury Districts Salary £12856.61 - £17421.40 per annum subject to qualifications and experience Full and Part Time Posts available. We are seeking focussed and organised individuals to support people with Learning Disabilities to develop; services, personal skills and access their community resources. Successful applicants will demonstrate knowledge and application of Personalised services and the flexibility to support people with a wide range of skills and abilities. Applicants will work at times requested by the people they support, are expected to follow Person Centered approaches and adhere to the guidelines set out in Valuing People Now. Full support and training will be available. These posts are subject to Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks. Being holders of the Positive about Disabled People award, disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria will be offered an interview in every circumstance. The closing date is 22nd May 2009. Applications must be via application form. For further information or to request an application form please contact: Lynda Salisbury Office Co-ordinator 01843 224482.
To apply/more information: Lynda Salisbury
East Kent Mencap
Quoting Job Ref: CSW0002
Tel: 01843-224482
Email Lynda.Salisbury@eastkentmencap.co.uk

BME SERVICE DEVELOPMENT
Gravesend
Salary: £20,000 p.a. pro rata 30 hrs per week £20,000 p.a. pro rata Alzheimer's & Dementia Support Services (ADSS) is the main provider of multicultural dementia services in N.W Kent. Are you able to engage with minority community groups to raise awareness of dementia among Black and minority ethnic(BME) people in West Kent? The post holder is expected to support the development and Delivery of dementia services for people from BME communities to request an application pack please telephone: 01474 533990 or email: sue.harman@alz-dem.org by 19th May 2009
To apply/more information: Alzheimers & Dementia Support
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01474 533990
Email sue.harman@alz-dem.org

Care Assistant
Canterbury
Salary: TBA
For more information call Maralyn - Tel: 01227 721527
Email: cares@littlebournecarehome.co.uk
To apply/more information: Littlebourne House
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 721527
Email cares@littlebournecarehome.co.uk

Support Workers and Community Carers
Kent
Salary: TBA
Required for Ashford, Folkestone, Hythe, Romney Marsh, Dover, Deal, Thanet, Canterbury, Maidstone Experience an advantage but not essential Excellent benefits package Opportunities for 'Career Advancement' Full & Ongoing training provided Reliavble, caring and flexible approach Travel Allowance Hours to suit Learning Disability, Children and Older People Own transport preferable but not essential. If you are looking foir a rewarding and challenging job, please call us on 0845 2702881 or email us.
To apply/more information: Community Nursing & Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 0845 2702881
Email info@community nursingcareagency.co.uk

Care Workers
Kent
Salary: TBA
Scott Care Ltd is expanding its current services and has the following vacancies: Care Workers: To assist service users living in their own homes in Medway, Herne Bay, Canterbury & Whitstable areas. Full time to include mornings, evenings and alternate weekends. Part time evenings and weekends. Experience not essential as comprehensive training will be given. Mileage allowance paid, uniform supplied. Car & mobile phone essential Phone 01634 730668 Mon - Fri 9am to 5pm only www.scottcare.co.uk
To apply/more information: Scott Care Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 730668
Email lesleykerr@scottcare.co.uk

Live-in carer
Kent
Salary: £800-£1,200 per fortnight
Fortnightly live-in care posts available, requirements are NVQ2 Care plus a clean driving licence. £800-£1200 per fortnight plus expenses. Tel: Able Community Care: 01603 281923.
To apply/more information: Able Community Care Group
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01603 281923
Email applications@kosmedia.co.uk

SUPPORT WORKERS
Dover
Salary: £6.79 per hour
Broadham Care Ltd is offering exciting career opportunities for experienced care staff at their residential care home for adults with learning disabilities in Dover. SUPPORT WORKERS £6.79 per hour NVQ level 2 is an advantage Full and part time available For more information, or an application please contact: Broadham Care Ltd on 01883 732211 or email HR@broadhamcare.co.uk www.broadhamcare.co.uk
To apply/more information: Broadham Care Ltd
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01883 732211
Email HR@broadhamcare.co.uk

Senior Operational Improvement Officer
Folkestone
Salary: £30,210
Closing Date: Friday 5 June 2009
Salary up to £30,210 Shepway District Council are now looking for an experienced Senior Operational Improvement Officer to join their recently restructured Revenues and Benefits Service and who will have responsibility for managing the council's Operational Improvement Team. The person we are looking for will help drive the service forward by: ? Being customer focused ? Delivering leadership to your team ? Appreciating the importance of performance and getting results ? Being able to interpret operational plans to ensure service improvements/efficiencies are realised.
You will need to: ? Have at least 2 years' experience within a Revenues and Benefits or systems support environment ? Have excellent knowledge of Housing Benefit Legislation ? Have a track record of delivering customer-focussed services ? Demonstrate that you can work as part of a dynamic team. In return we will reward you with a competitive salary, flexible working hours and a challenging career. If you think you would like to join us, please contact Mark Wilson on 01303 853389 for an informal discussion. Application details can be downloaded at below or email jobs@shepway.gov.uk alternatively call our 24 hour answerphone service on 01303 853481. The closing date for completed application forms is Friday 5 June 2009.
To apply/more information: Shepway District Council
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 853481
Email jobs@shepway.gov.uk

PUBLIC NOTICES

The Insolvency Act 1986
MOW & TRIM LANDSCAPES LIMITED
(In Creditors' Voluntary Liquidation)
I, Robert Cundy of RJC Financial Management, Hayes House, 6 Hayes Road, Bromley, Kent, BR2 9AA, give notice that I was appointed liquidator of the above named company on 8th May 2009.
Notice is hereby given that the creditors of the above named company which is being voluntarily wound up, are required, on or before Friday 19th June 2009 to prove their debts by sending to the undersigned, Robert Cundy of RJC Financial Management, Hayes House, 6 Hayes Road, Bromley, Kent, BR2 9AA, the liquidator of the company, written statements of the amounts they claim to be due to them from the company and, if so requested, to provide such further details or produce such documentary evidence as may appear to the liquidator to be necessary. A creditor who has not proved this debt before the declaration of any dividend is not entitled to disturb, by reason that he has not participated in it, the distribution of that dividend or any other dividend declared before his debt was proved.
R Cundy, Liquidator

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS – NOTICES OF APPLICATIONS

The following applications have been submitted to the Council and are being advertised for the reason(s) given in each case.

TM/09/01050/FL – Hermitage Farm Barn Lucks Hill West Malling Kent ME19 6HW – Mr Julian Lingham is applying for change of use of cowsheds to residential accommodation with parking and garden (resubmission of TM/03/02884/FL) part retrospective. Reason: CA

TM/09/00989/FL – The Malt House 115 The Street Mereworth Maidstone Kent ME18 5LU – Mr John Self is applying for landscape gardens, boundary walls, fences and gates, garage extension/alterations and outbuildings (resubmission of TM/07/03715/FL). Reason: LB CA HH

Reasons for the case being publicised:
LB Application relates to/affects a Listed Building or its setting
CA Application is within/affects a Conservation Area
HH Householder application - As this is a householder application, in the event of an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, which is to be dealt with on the basis of representations in writing, any representations made about this application will be sent to the Secretary of State, and there will be no further opportunity to comment at appeal stage.

These applications are displayed on our website www.tmbc.gov.uk – click on the button "Do It Online" and follow the instructions for "Planning Applications" online. You can submit your comments by emailing to planning.applications@tmbc.gov.uk (please quote the application number by the date set out below). Please note that we will publish a copy of any representations received on the Council's website, including your name and address.

Copies of applications listed may be seen during office hours (8.30 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday). Any applications within Hadlow, Hildenborough and Tonbridge are available at Tonbridge Castle, Tonbridge. Other applications are available at the office of the Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ. Any representations should be made in writing quoting the application number by 7 June 2009.

David Hughes
Chief Executive
17 May 2009

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Highways - Boroughs of Dartford, Gravesham, Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone and Tonbridge & Malling and the District of Sevenoaks

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
VARIOUS ROADS, WEST KENT AREA (TEMPORARY RESTRICTION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order restricting all vehicular traffic to travelling at a speed not exceeding 50mph on the roads as noted in Schedule 1.

The Order will become effective on 18th May 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to take place in two blocks as noted in the attached schedule. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

SCHEDULE 1

Road Name	Extent	Phase 1 Dates	Phase 2 Dates
A206 Bob Dunn Way, Dartford	Whole Length	N/A	31/8/09 for 5 days
A2018 Shepherds Lane, Dartford	A2 to B2174 Princes Road	16/7/09 for 1 day	5/11/09 for 1 day
B2174 Princes Road, Dartford	A2018 Shepherds Lane	17/7/09 for 1 day	6/11/09 for 1 day
A296 Princes Road, Dartford	Park Road to Gore Road	21/7/09 for 1 day	9/11/09 for 1 day
A206 Crossways Boulevard, Dartford	Cotton Lane to Station Road	28/7/09 for 15 days	17/11/09 for 5 days
B255 St Clements Way, Dartford	A2 to A226 London Road	21/7/09 for 5 days	10/11/09 for 5 days
A249 Detling Hill/ Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone	From M20 to Bearsted Road	26/5/09 for 14 days	14/9/09 for 15 days
A20 Coldharbour Lane, Maidstone	From M20 to St Laurence Avenue	15/6/09 for 2 days	5/10/09 for 2 days
A229 Bluebell Hill, Maidstone/Aylesford	From Running Horse Roundabout to Lord Lees Gyratory System	17/6/09 for 6 days	7/10/09 for 6 days
A228 Snodland Bypass, Snodland	Between Ham Hill Roundabout and Holborough Road Roundabout	25/6/09 for 2 days	15/10/09 for 2 days
A228 Castle Way, Leybourne	M20 Junction 4 Roundabout to Ham Hill Roundabout	29/6/09 for 1 day	19/10/09 for 3 days
A228 Branbridges Road/Boyle Way, East Peckham	From B2160 Maidstone Road to B2015 Maidstone Road	2/7/09 for 4 days	21/10/09 for 4 days
A26 London Road, Tonbridge	From A26 Quarry Hill Road to end of Dual Carriageway Section	8/7/09 for 1 day	28/10/09 for 1 day
A228 Castle Way/ Ashton Way, West Malling	M20 Junction 4 Roundabout to Kings Hill Roundabout	9/7/09 for 5 days	29/10/09 for 5 days
A25 Sevenoaks Road, Ightham	From Rectory Lane to Pillarbox Lane	17/8/09 for 1 day	7/12/09 for 1 day
A25 Ightham Bypass, Ightham	From Rectory to Borough Green Road	17/8/09 for 1 day	7/12/09 for 1 day
A228 Pembury Road, Tunbridge Wells	A264 Pembury Road to Tonbridge Road	18/8/09 for 1 day	8/12/09 for 1 day
A20 London Road, Swanley	A225 Dartford Road to M25 Junction 3 Roundabout	13/8/09 for 1 day	3/12/09 for 1 day
A225 Sevenoaks Road/Otford Road, Sevenoaks	From Bubblestone Road to the Riverside Retail Park	4/8/09 for 1 day	24/11/09 for 1 day
A224 Polhill, Sevenoaks	From Morants Court Road to Shoreham Lane	5/8/09 for 3 days	25/11/09 for 3 days
A20 Swanley Bypass, Swanley	M25 Junction 3 Roundabout to Border with London Borough of Bexley	10/8/09 for 3 days	30/11/09 for 3 days
A25 Westerham Road, Sevenoaks	Larkfield Road to Dryhill Lane	17/8/09 for 1 day	4/12/09 for 1 day
A289 Hasted Road, Higham	Whole Length	18/5/09 for 5 days	7/9/09 for 5 days

The purpose of the Order is to ensure the safety of workforce whilst Highway Maintenance Works are carried out.

Highways - District of Ashford

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, ASHFORD) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because footway works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on various roads, Ashford from as described in column 1 of the schedule to this order on 18 May 2009 for an estimated period of three weeks or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via as described in column 3 of the schedule to this order.

Specified Road	Length of road affected	Alternative Routes
Star Road, Ashford	Entire length	No alternative route
Wallis Road, Ashford	Entire length	No alternative route
Dering Road, Ashford	Entire length	No alternative route
Star Road, Wallis Road and Dering Road, Ashford	The Kent County Council (Ashford) (Traffic Regulation) (Star Road, Wallis Road & Dering Road) (One Way) Order 1997 Part D is temporarily suspended for the duration of this order	

Highways - District of Canterbury

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(HAYES ALLEY, WHITSTABLE) (RESTRICTIONS ON PEDESTRIANS) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because building refurbishment works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through access on Hayes Alley, Whitstable, between High Street and Middle Wall, from 26 May 2009, for an estimated period of 10 weeks or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for pedestrians will be via High Street, Terrys Lane and Middle Wall.

Highways - Borough of Dartford

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
NURSTEAD LANE, LONGFIELD (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Nurstead Lane, Longfield between B260 Longfield Road and Nurstead Avenue.

The Order will become effective on 18th May 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last 18 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Longfield Hill, A227 Wrotham Road and Park Hill.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate connection to telecommunications compound on behalf of BT

Highways - Borough of Gravesham

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
OLD ROAD WEST, WOODFIELD AVENUE AND ELMFIELD CLOSE, GRAVESEND (TEMPORARY RESTRICTION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is held on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Old Road West, Gravesend, between its junctions with A227 Wrotham Road and Singlewell Road prohibiting traffic heading towards A227 Wrotham Road. This Order will also prohibit vehicular traffic on Woodfield Avenue, Gravesend at its junction with Old Road West. This Order will also prohibit right turns from Elmfield Close onto Old Road West, Gravesend.

The Order will become effective on 1st June 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last 8 weeks. These closures and restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: for light vehicles - Singlewell Road, Cross Lane West, New House Lane, Dashwood Road. For HGV's - Windmill Street, A227 Wrotham Road

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate gas mains replacement works.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
HENLEY STREET, LUDDESDOWN (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Henley Street, Luddesdown between its junctions with Gold Street.

The Order will become effective on 18th May 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last 12 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Gold Street.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate drainage works to be carried out by Kent Highway Services.

Highways - Boroughs of Maidstone /Tonbridge & Malling

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(A249 DETLING HILL/ SITTINGBOURNE ROAD AT DETLING, THURNHAM AND STOCKBURY & A229 BLUEBELL HILL, AYLESFORD) (30MPH & 10 MPH CONVOY WORKING SPEED RESTRICTIONS) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic traveling at any speed greater than 30mph and 10mph for the implementation of convoy working. This restriction will be at various locations as required on the A249 Detling Hill/ Sittingbourne Road between the roundabout at junction 7 of the M20 motorway to the Stockbury roundabout at junction 5 of the M2 motorway in both directions of travel and on the A229 Bluebell Hill, Aylesford between the Lord Lees roundabout to the start of the A229 Chatham Road in both directions of travel.

The order will become effective on 18th May 2009 and will be in operation at times when required when indicated by signage on site. The anticipated dates of the restrictions will be for the A249 between 26th May to 18th June 2009 and for the A229 between 18th May to 5th June 2009. The restrictions will be in place overnight only.

Kent Highway Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary to facilitate power supplies to CCTV and recognition cameras. Should you require any further information about these works, their contact is Anne Padfield on 01634 385500.

Highways - District of Sevenoaks

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
RYE LANE, DUNTON GREEN (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is held on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Rye Lane, Dunton Green between its junctions with Pilgrims Way and Willow Park.

The Order will become effective on 1st June 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last 1 day on the 1st June. These closures will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Pilgrims Way West, Telston Lane, Willow Park.

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate the replacement of a manhole for Thames Water

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
CLINTON LANE, EDENBRIDGE (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is held on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Clinton Lane, Edenbridge between its junctions with Four Elms Road and Moorden Lane.

The Order will become effective on 1st June 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last 8 weeks. These closures will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described will be via: Moorden Lane, Station Hill, Penshurst Road, Fordcoombe Road, New Road, Spring Hill, Ashurst Road, Hartfield Road, Mill Hill, Mount St Aignan Way, Station Road, Main Road, Spout Lane, Pootings Road and Clinton Lane.

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate the Repairs to road over rail bridge

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
VARIOUS ROADS, COWDEN (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is held on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on various roads as per the attached schedule.

The Order will become effective on 1st June 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last as noted in the attached schedule. These closures will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative routes for the routes described will be as noted in the attached schedule.

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate the replacement of Telegraph poles and the attached cables on behalf of BT.

SCHEDULE 1

Road Name	Length of Closure	Diversion Route
Pigdown Lane 200m to the northeast of the Woodlands	2 days from 2nd June 2009	Uckfield Lane, Rectory Lane
Wilderness Lane 100m west of Wilderness Farm	2 days from 9th June 2009	Uckfield Lane and unnamed road
Moat Lane, Cowden 200m east of Sandfields Farm	2 days from 16th June 2009	Blowers Lane, Bassetts Lane

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
CHURCH STREET, SHOREHAM (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst an event is held on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Church Street, Shoreham between Filston Lane and A225 Shoreham Road.

The Order will become effective on 1st June 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last 1 day on the 7th June. These closures will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Filston Lane, Twitton Lane, Pilgrims Way West, A225 Station Road, A225 Shoreham Road

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate access to BT plant to repair cable.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
CROUCH HOUSE ROAD, EDENBRIDGE (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Crouch House Road, Edenbridge between its junctions with Hilders Lane and Lingfield Road.

The Order will become effective on 18th May 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last 4 months. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the route described above will be via: Hilders Lane, Station Road, Mont St Aignan Way, Lingfield Road

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate essential repair and maintenance to the rail bridge.

Highways - Borough of Swale

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(CHURCH ROAD, EASTCHURCH) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the installation of a new electrical supply, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Church Road, Eastchurch, at the rear of 84 High Street, on or after 19 May 2009 for an estimated period of one week or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via High Street, Rowetts Way and Church Road.

COAST PROTECTION ACT 1949
APPLICATION FOR CONSTRUCTION WORKS CONSENT FOR A ROAD BRIDGE AT MILTON CREEK, SITTINGBOURNE, NORTH KENT

Notice is hereby given that Kent County Council has applied to the Secretary of State for the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under Section 34 of the Coast Protection Act 1949, as amended by Section 36 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1988, for a consent to construct a road bridge at Milton Creek, Sittingbourne, North Kent.

Plans showing the position of the works may be inspected at: Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

Representations or objections on navigational grounds in respect of the application should be made in writing, giving an address to which correspondence relating to the representation or objection may be sent, to Sara Siddig, Marine Development Control Team, Area 4D, Ergon House, Horseferry Road, London, SW1A 2AL, or alternatively emailed to sara.siddig@mfa.gsi.gov.uk, addressed to Sara Siddig within 28 days of the date of this notice, quoting reference DC8664.

The Secretary of State will pass to the applicant a copy of any objection or representation he receives.

Highways - District of Thanet

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(ELIZABETH ROAD, RAMSGATE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Street Lighting Renewal works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Elizabeth Road, Ramsgate for the entire length on or after 1st June 2009 for an estimated period of 4 days or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

There is no alternative route, local access only.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(THE PARADE, MARGATE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because new electrical service works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on The Parade, Margate from the junction of Market Street to the junction of King Street on or after 18 May 2009 for an estimated period of 5 working days or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Market Street, Market Place, Lombard Street, Hawley Street and King Street.

Highways - Borough of Tunbridge Wells

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(CHURCH ROAD, KILNDOWN) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Church Road, Kilndown outside Whites Cottage on or after Monday 1st June 2009 for a period of up to 1 week or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for northbound traffic via Chicks Lane, Rogers Rough Road and for southbound traffic vice versa.

EDF Energy apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to install cabling in the carriageway, footway and verge. Should you require any further information regarding these works, their contact is Emma Orsborne of Amber Langis Limited on 01474 573831.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS IN THE BOROUGH OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS) (1) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on the routes described in Schedule 1.

The alternative route for each route described in Schedule 1 is described in Schedule 2. Access will be maintained up to the points of closure.

The Order will become effective on 18th May 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last for up to two days on each road. These closures will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place. The dates for works will be notified on site 14 days in advance.

SCHEDULE 1

Road Name	Extent of Closure
Claytons Lane, Ashurst	Whole Length
Broad Oak Close, Tunbridge Wells	Whole Length
Showfields Road, Tunbridge Wells	Whole Length
Bayhall Road, Tunbridge Wells	Sibbys Corner
Vauxhall Lane, Southborough	Whole Length
Victoria Road, Southborough	Whole Length
Franks Hollow Road, Bidborough	Whole Length
Old House Lane, Speldhurst	Whole Length
Stockland Green Road, Speldhurst	Whole Length
Bentham Hill, Speldhurst	Whole Length
Sherenden Lane, Capel	Whole Length
Dislingbury Road, Capel	Dislingbury Farm to Pembury Walk
Spout Lane, Brenchley	Whole Length
Knowle Lane, Brenchley	Whole Length
Knowle Road, Brenchley	Whole Length
Hog Hole Lane, Lamberhurst	Whole Length
Rosemary Lane, Lamberhurst	Whole Length
Lidwells Lane, Goudhurst	Whole Length
Clayhill Road, Cranbrook	Whole Length
Marden Road, Cranbrook	Whole Length
Tilsden Lane, Cranbrook	Whole Length
Park Lane, Cranbrook	Whole Length
Badger Lane, Cranbrook	Whole Length
Water Lane, Hawkhurst	Whole Length
Whites Lane, Hawkhurst	Whole Length
Wellington Road, Hawkhurst	Whole Length
Sponden Lane, Hawkhurst	Whole Length
Conghurst Lane, Hawkhurst	Whole Length
Coldharbour Road, Benenden	Whole Length
Frogs Hole Lane, Benenden	Whole Length
Bishopden Lane, Benenden	Whole Length
Stepneyford Lane, Benenden	Whole Length
Woodcock Lane, Benenden	Whole Length

SCHEDULE 2

Road Name	Diversion Route
Claytons Lane, Ashurst	No suitable diversion
Broad Oak Close, Tunbridge Wells	No suitable diversion
Showfields Road, Tunbridge Wells	No suitable diversion
Bayhall Road, Tunbridge Wells	Broadmead Avenue, Broadmead, Eridge Road, Broadwater Lane
Vauxhall Lane, Southborough	Pembury Road, Quarry Hill Road, A26 London Road
Victoria Road, Southborough	Constitutional Hill Road, Bentham Hill, Speldhurst Road, Kibbles Lane
Franks Hollow Road, Bidborough	Penshurst Road, Barden Road, Speldhurst Road, Stockland Green Road
Old House Lane, Speldhurst	Fordcombe Road, The Lane
Stockland Green Road, Speldhurst	Speldhurst Hill, Barden Road, Penshurst Road
Bentham Hill, Speldhurst	Etherington Hill, Kibbles Lane, Victoria Road
Sherenden Lane, Capel	Hartlake Road, Five Oak Green Road
Dislingbury Road, Capel	Amhurst Bank Road, Redwing Lane, A228 Maidstone Road, A21 Pembury Road
Spout Lane, Brenchley	Tong Road, Fairmans Lane, Horsmonden Road
Knowle Lane, Brenchley	Mile Oak Road, Pearson Green Road, Knowle Road
Knowle Road, Brenchley	Crook Road, Pixot Hill, Mile Oak Road, Pearson Green Road
Hog Hole Lane, Lamberhurst	INeills Road, Sleepers Stile, B2100 The Slade
Rosemary Lane, Lamberhurst	A21 London Road, B2087 High Street
Lidwells Lane, Goudhurst	North Road, Blind Lane
Clayhill Road, Cranbrook	Furnace Lane, A21 London Road
Marden Road, Cranbrook	Goudhurst Road, A262 Goudhurst Road
Tilsden Lane, Cranbrook	Stilebridge Lane, Underlynn Lane
Park Lane, Cranbrook	A229 Hawkhurst Road, A229 Cranbrook Road, A268 High Street, A268 Hawkhurst Road, London Road, Lady Oak Road
Badger Lane, Cranbrook	No Suitable Alternative route
Water Lane, Hawkhurst	A268 Rye Road, A229 Cranbrook Road, Potters Lane
Whites Lane, Hawkhurst	Queens Road, A268 Rye Road, Water Lane
Wellington Road, Hawkhurst	Patchwork Road, Slipmill Road
Sponden Lane, Hawkhurst	Crouch Lane, Hopehorse Lane, Standen Street, Mile Street
Conghurst Lane, Hawkhurst	B2244 Hastings Road, A229 Moorhill Road, A229 Highgate Hill, A268 Rye Road
Coldharbour Road, Benenden	Babbs Lane, B2086 Mounts Hill, New Pound Road
Frogs Hole Lane, Benenden	Mapleton Road
Bishopden Lane, Benenden	Green Lane, Benenden Road
Stepneyford Lane, Benenden	Green Lane, New Pond Road, The Street, Benenden Road
Woodcock Lane, Benenden	Standen Street, New Pound Road, The Street, Benenden Road, Ramsden Lane

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate carriageway patching works to be undertaken by Kent Highway Services.

Please Note: Access will be maintained for all residents, businesses and their visitors as much as possible during the works.

For further information or comment please call Mark Simmons of Kent Highway Services on 08458 247 800.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(STANDEN STREET, IDEN GREEN) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Standen Street, Iden Green from the junction of Iden Green Road to Parkfield Crescent on or after Saturday 6th June 2009 for 2 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for southbound traffic via Iden Green Road, The Street, Rolvenden Road, Ramsden Lane, Woodcock Lane and for northbound traffic vice versa.

Kent Highway Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary for highway drainage works. Should you require any further information about these works, their contact is Andrew Young on 08458 247 800.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(SPELDHURST ROAD, LANGTON GREEN) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Speldhurst Road, Langton Green from the junction of Leggs Lane to Bullingstone Lane on or after Sunday 7th June 2009 for 1 day or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for southbound traffic via Speldhurst Road, Langton Road, Penshurst Road, Pounsbridge Hill, Leggs Lane and for northbound traffic vice versa.

Mr Knight apologises for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary for the removal a boat.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(SANDHURST ROAD, TUNBRIDGE WELLS) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Sandhurst Road between Sherwood Road and Ferndale on or after Sunday 7th June 2009 for a period of up to 1 day or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for northbound traffic via Pembury Road, Calverley Park Gardens, Calverley Road, Camden Road, Quarry Road, Grosvenor Bridge, Upper Grosvenor Road, Sandhurst Road and for southbound traffic vice versa.

Kent Highway Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary for carriageway resurfacing. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Andy Padgham on 08458 247 800.

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

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Sleeper awakes to Scirocco diesel's hot wind of change

By **STEVE LOADER**

IF YOU were a motoring Rip Van Winkle waking after some 40 years to news of VW's latest Scirocco Coupé model, you might want to nod off again.

For a 'performance diesel coupé' launched at the time of the original 1970s Scirocco would have prompted laughter, shock and anger.

However, as VW sister brand Audi has proved with multiple Le Mans winning racers, diesel cars are no longer dirty, smelly and sluggish.

And there will be many would-be Scirocco buyers and company car user choosers who have been waiting for just this option.

The new £21,755 Scirocco GT 170PS (168bhp) 2.0-litre TDI diesel flagship – now available to order – delivers plenty of low-down acceleration to take it to 62mph in 8.1 seconds and can also average more than 50mpg.

The turbocharged 200PS (197bhp) 2.0-litre petrol flagship is only a second faster on the sprint and struggles to average 40mpg.

Our still sleepy onlooker would also be horrified to learn that this 'oil burner' can also be specified with an automatic gearbox; the car comes with a six-speed manual shift as standard or optional six-speed DSG 'box (£1,305), which truly can be driven as a manual or left in self-shifting mode depending on mood and road conditions.

While Rip's jaw is on the floor, he must also accept the DSG's clever double-clutch format means that this version accelerates as fast as the manual, is just as economical and emits only slightly more CO2 – 147g/km against the manual's 139. The GT trim level includes six-CD autochanger and dual-zone air con and, as on all Sciroccos, VW's Adaptive Chassis Control (ACC) allowing a choice of normal, comfort or sport modes for suspension and steering.

But the latest Scirocco is not the only performance newcomer due from the VW stable – a GTI (above) based on the sixth generation Golf arrives on Friday (from £22,410).

Like the outgoing GTI, it has a turbocharged 1,984cc engine, but transformed by revised pistons and rings, oil pump, induction system and high-pressure fuel pump.

As a result, the old car's 200PS (197bhp) output has been boosted to 210, delivering a sprint to 62mph in 6.9 seconds against the 7.2 of its predecessor.

Despite this, the new car is greener with CO2 emissions falling from 189g/km to 170g/km (DSG: 173 g/km) and average economy rising nearly 4mpg to around 39mpg.

The car is available as a three or five-door with a six-speed manual or, for a £1,300 premium, the slick DSG gearbox mentioned earlier for the Scirocco.

Prodigious power through the front wheels is managed by a new XDS system, devised to produce less wheelspin and greater control and precision on demanding roads.

It is complemented by GTI springs and dampers and lowered ride height – 22mm at the front and 15mm at the rear.

Keen drivers can also specify VW's adaptive chassis control system (ACC), featuring pneumatically controlled damper units.

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07 07 ASTRA 1-8 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C ESTATE PANACOTTA 6000 MILES.....£7495
07 07 ASTRA 1-8 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C 5 DOOR TURQUOISE 14000 MILES.....£6995
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FIRST GEAR

Compiled by Steve Loader

Toyota now has even smarter IQ

TOYOTA has popped a clever new engine into the IQ city car launched earlier this year.

The new 1.33-litre petrol unit with Toyota's Stop & Start system has been seen in the revamped Yaris supermini range, but now creates a new IQ3 flagship for the Japanese brand's smallest model.

Prices will be confirmed nearer the July launch, but the new version will still be capable of averaging nearly 60mpg – the existing 1.0-litre IQ averages nearly 66mpg – thanks to the Stop & Start system.

Toyota reckons this cuts fuel use by up to three cent by automatically stopping the engine when the car is stationary at the lights, for instance, and then restarting it.

However, the extra power and acceleration of the bigger engine does mean that emissions are higher and the IQ3 will incur £35/year road tax – the smaller engine is tax free.

Nevertheless, with the 3+1 seating layout of the range, this engine brings a 'bigger car' option that puts further pressure on the IQ's most obvious rival – the two-seat only Smart car.

Saab pursues rugged 4x4 set

SAAB seems to hope that cooling demand for overt 4x4 vehicles has re-kindled interest in the rugged all-wheel drive estate option currently offered by just a handful of brands.

And its new 9-3X model, on sale now, is also priced aggressively from £24,995 for the 1.9-litre diesel version featuring Saab's new Cross Wheel Drive system (XWD).

Standard equipment levels look generous too, including part-leather sport seats, heated front seats, cruise control, nine-speaker sounds with MP3 compatibility, dual-zone climate control, matt chrome roof rails and 17-inch alloys.

Its most obvious rival is the new A4 Allroad estate from Audi, which it out-specs and undercuts by around £5,000.

Swedish rival Volvo's XC70 is barely cheaper than the A4, so the biggest threat would appear to be Subaru's bigger Legacy Outback (from £22,500) and the Skoda Octavia Scout (from £18,750).

Clio carries on after makeover

SOME three years since launch, the Renault Clio supermini has had a dramatic midlife makeover.

It now looks more like its slinky big sister, the recently launched all-new Mégane, having gained a huge grille below number plate level.

It is in showrooms already, priced from £9,995 for the three-door only Extreme model.

There are also two new Clios, the £11,905 TomTom Edition – featuring a cut-price TomTom-derived sat nav system – and a 'warm hatch' GT (from £13,495).

But Renault has ensured that petrolheads need not wait for a revised ultimate performance Clio – two Clio RenaultSport 200 versions are also available from £15,750.

Prices that make you look twice.

Savings end 30th June 2009.

Matiz 0.8 S 5dr from £5,595

Aveo 1.2 S 3dr from £6,695

Captiva 2.4 Petrol LS 5-seat from £14,995

Features: • ABS brakes • Immobiliser • ISOFIX child seat restraint system • RDS radio/CD player with MP3

Matiz 0.8 S 5dr • Central locking • Dual airbags
Aveo 1.2 S 3dr • Central locking • Dual airbags
Captiva 2.4 Petrol LS 5-seat • Front, side & curtain airbags • Remote control locking

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Motability

Vehicles shown feature metallic paint available at extra cost (Matiz £325, Aveo £350, Captiva £400). 3 years/30,000 miles full service package at an optional cost (Matiz and Aveo £249, Captiva £349). Available at participating retailers only. Not available in conjunction with any other offers. Savings against current man. rec. price at time of publication and available on UK supplied vehicles ordered and registered before 30th June 2009. Prices correct at time of press. (Chev71670)

Official Government Environment Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Aveo 1.2 S 3dr: Urban - 39.2 (7.2), Extra-urban - 61.4 (4.6), Combined - 51.4 (5.5). CO_2 emissions 132g/km. Captiva 2.4 Petrol LS 5-seat: Urban - 23.5 (12.0), Extra-urban - 39.8 (7.1), Combined - 31.7 (8.9). CO_2 emissions 217g/km. Matiz 0.8 S 5dr: Urban - 43.5 (6.5), Extra-urban - 68.9 (4.1), Combined - 56.5 (5.0). CO_2 emissions 119g/km.

Ford can afford to be smug

by STEVELOADER

AS THE recession has cut deeper into the British motor market, stronger brands are showing their resilience.

And the UK's No1 player, Ford is maintaining its leadership through a mixture of market clout, good judgement and luck.

The company has benefited in recent years from having a large dealership network and having previously gone through the pain of closing inefficient heavily unionised car plants – all Ford cars are produced abroad now.

And while its US parent is struggling, it is a long way from being the financial liability that is General Motors – a factor undermining Ford of Britain's GM arch-rival, Vauxhall.

The British and European arm of Ford also deserves credit for responding sensibly to the 'green wind of change': as the global warming message finally struck home with consumers, it has catered for demand with more economical/lower emission ECOnetic versions of best-sellers like the Mondeo and Britain's perennial favourite, the Focus.

INSPIRATIONAL: The Capri took Ford's promotional efforts to new heights

Environmental website Clean Green Cars said this week that the brand's low CO2 emissions are leading the industry.

But Ford has also been fortunate that the recession, recent fuel price crisis and global warming reality have struck just as it launched all-new versions of its two smallest and most economical models, the Fiesta supermini and Ka city car.

The Ka – a spin-off from the Fiat 500 – is unlikely to become the icon its predecessor was, yet it is an attractive economy option in straitened times. The Fiesta though, is Britain's best seller so far this year and has just picked up What Diesel? Magazine's 'Car of the Year' title.

It is a truly impressive package for people looking to downsize and save money. It drives and feels like a car from the class above and the ECOnetic is so lean and mean that it escapes road tax – as the market leader from another arena says 'every little helps'.

No wonder then that Ford has used a weakened market to tighten its grip; Ford's share of April registrations increased by 3.9 percentage points against April, 2008, and it maintained its leadership with an 18.4 per cent slice.

We need to temper this with the inevitable use of pre-registrations at dealerships to massage figures. But Ford dealers are selling used and 'nearly new' motors in big numbers too, so the blue oval brand is moving the metal whichever way you look at it, helped also by not being too exposed in the performance and 4x4 sectors that have been trashed by the recession.

Life goes on for Capri at 40

FORTY years of the Ford Capri coupe are being celebrated up and down the country this summer.

It was conceived as a British and European 'coupe for the people' and inspired by the American Ford Mustang, the most successful of a new breed of long-nosed short-tailed 'pony cars' that had stormed the US market.

Ford launched the Capri here in January 1969 and marketed it to the style-conscious as "the car you always promised yourself".

Detractors derided it as a 'Cortina in drag' and poked fun at styling that usually masked a weedy engine, including a 1.3-litre unit, but three generations of Capri racked up sales of nearly two million over 18 years and confirmed icon status, though production ended in 1986.

Success was partly due to Ford honing marketing skills that have kept it to the fore in the UK particularly; the Capri line-up always included halo-inducing muscle models making the most of the car's rear-driven layout, while obscuring the emasculated but big-selling 'cooking' versions.

There was a three-litre powerhouse early on and scorching RS2600 and RS3100 versions, while TV appearances in cult shows like Minder and The Professionals helped fuel appeal.

Perhaps the ultimate model in terms of power and status was the 160bhp Capri 2.8 injection and its final and much sought-after incarnation, the limited edition Capri 280. Also known as the Brooklands Capri, the 280 was the last version off the production line in December, 1986.

Capri commemorative meetings in the South include those at the Ace Café in London (September 5) and Brooklands Museum, Surrey (September 26). *SL*

THE ULTIMATE? The Ford Capri 2.8i

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Official Government Test Environmental Data - Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): Agila Club 1.0i 12v ecoFLEX: urban 47.9 (5.9), extra-urban 64.2 (4.4), combined 56.5 (5.0), CO_2 Emissions 119 g/km; Astra Life 1.4i 16v: urban 35.3 (8.0), extra-urban 56.5 (5.0), combined 46.3 (6.1), CO_2 Emissions 146 g/km.

All models shown have optional metallic paint available at an additional cost of £395. Savings shown are against MRP at time of publication. Prices shown are available on selected Retailer stock only, whilst stocks last and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. * £2000 Government Scrappage Allowance towards a new car is offered on condition that the traded-in car must have been registered on or before 31st August 1999 and have been registered in your name for a least one year and the registration document must be in your name and address. A valid MOT, current road tax and insurance for legal driving on the road is required at the point of order. Extra savings provided by General Motors UK Ltd. Offers available to private individuals and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only). All other sales categories are excluded. Offers apply to selected new vehicles ordered between 8.05.09 and 02.07.09, and are subject to terms and conditions. Offers available at participating retailers only. UK supplied vehicles only. Excludes Isle of Man and Channel Islands. (Vaux72592)

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OCTAVIA	ELEGANCE 5DR ESTATE	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	GF08VEW	APRIL '08	5570	CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£12,990.00
SUPERB	COMFORT 4DR SALOON	1.9 TDi 130 BHP (DIESEL)	GU52WCA	DECEMBER '02	59701	CANADIAN GREEN	£5,490.00
SUPERB	COMFORT 4DR SALOON	1.9 TDi 130 BHP (DIESEL)	GJ55OUW	SEPTEMBER '05	68989	SAHARA BEIGE	£6,990.00
SUPERB	ELEGANCE 4DR SALOON	2.0 TDi DSG (DIESEL)	GJ58MXM	SEPTEMBER '08	2340	CANDY WHITE	£18,490.00

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FABIA	2 5DR HATCH	1.2 12v 70 BHP (PETROL)	2008 - 58	TBA	DYNAMIC BLUE	£10,350.00	£2,060.00	£8,290.00
FABIA	2 5DR HATCH	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 08	TBA	SATIN GREY	£12,185.00	£3,695.00	£8,490.00
FABIA	2 5DR HATCH	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	BLACK MAGIC	£12,240.00	£2,450.00	£9,790.00
FABIA	2 5DR HATCH	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	TANGERINE ORANGE	£12,560.00	£2,570.00	£9,990.00
FABIA	2 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	SATIN GREY	£12,925.00	£2,435.00	£10,490.00
FABIA	2 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	SATIN GREY	£13,310.00	£2,820.00	£10,490.00
FABIA	2 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£13,310.00	£2,820.00	£10,490.00
FABIA	3 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	BLACK MAGIC	£14,315.00	£2,825.00	£11,490.00
FABIA	2 5DR ESTATE	1.4 16v 85 BHP (PETROL)	2008 - 08	12177	STORM BLUE	£12,330.00	£3,350.00	£8,980.00
FABIA	2 5DR ESTATE	1.6 16v AUTO (PETROL)	2008 - 58	TBA	CAPPUCCINO BEIGE	£13,355.00	£2,365.00	£10,990.00
FABIA	2 5DR ESTATE	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	CORRIDA RED	£12,490.00	£2,500.00	£9,990.00
FABIA	3 5DR ESTATE	1.6 16v 105 BHP (PETROL)	2008 - 08	7645	BRILLIANT SILVER	£13,635.00	£3,645.00	£9,990.00
ROOMSTER	LEVEL 3 5DR MPV	1.4 TDi 80 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	ANTHRACITE GREY	£14,735.00	£3,745.00	£10,990.00
OCTAVIA	AMBIENTE 5DR HATCH	1.8T 160 BHP (PETROL)	2008 - 58	TBA	DIAMOND SILVER	£15,190.00	£3,700.00	£11,490.00
OCTAVIA	AMBIENTE 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 57	10585	BRILLIANT SILVER	£15,150.00	£3,810.00	£11,340.00
OCTAVIA	ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	1.6 FSi 105 BHP (PETROL)	2008 - 58	TBA	FLAMENCO RED	£14,665.00	£2,175.00	£12,490.00
OCTAVIA	ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	1.9 TDi 105 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	SATIN GREY	£16,170.00	£3,680.00	£12,490.00
OCTAVIA	ELEGANCE 5DR HATCH	2.0 TDi DSG (DIESEL)	2009 - 58	TBA	FLAMENCO RED	£19,185.00	£3,195.00	£15,990.00
OCTAVIA	AMBIENTE 5DR ESTATE	2.0 TDi 140 BHP (DIESEL)	2008 - 58	TBA	CORRIDA RED	£17,105.00	£4,115.00	£12,990.00
OCTAVIA	AMBIENTE 5DR ESTATE	2.0 TDi DSG (DIESEL)	2008 - 08	TBA	STORM BLUE	£18,615.00	£5,625.00	£12,990.00
OCTAVIA	L&K 5DR ESTATE	2.0 FSi AUTO (PETROL)	2008 - 08	TBA	ISLAND GREEN	£20,595.00	£4,775.00	£15,820.00
SUPERB	ELEGANCE 4DR SALOON	2.0 TDi DSG (DIESEL)	2009 - 58	TBA	ROSSO BRUNELLO	£24,010.00	£5,020.00	£19,990.00

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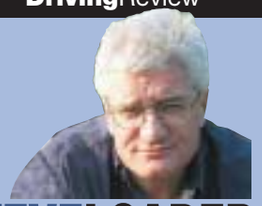
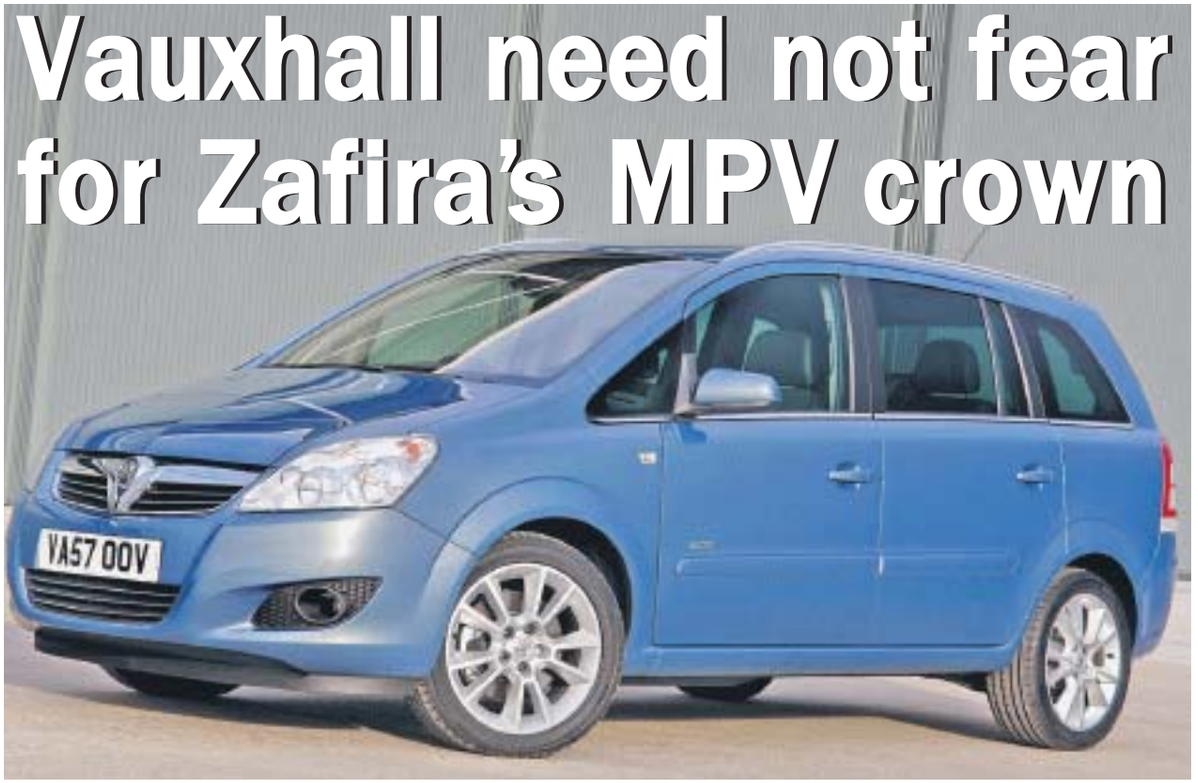


by STEVELOADER

CHIEF DRIVING CORRESPONDENT
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

Vauxhall Zafira

Vauxhall need not fear for Zafira's MPV crown



JACK OF ALL TRADES: The Vauxhall Zafira is still ahead of the competition as the best overall MPV for both load carrying and road handling

RENAULT must rue the day it let rivals like this week's test car steal the midi-MPV market sector it created in 1996 with the Scenic.

That car inspired many imitators, but Vauxhall floored everyone with its 'seven-seats as standard' Zafira in 1999.

Renault has been playing catch-up ever since, but even the arrival of the latest seven-seat Grand Scenic this week may prove to be lost cause.

For the Zafira, into its second generation since 2005, is the complete all-rounder even if the clever fold flat Flex-7 system has been copied and perhaps improved upon by others.

With the five rear seats down, it makes a pretty good van, but these can be quickly popped up in various permutations to suit passenger numbers and luggage.

This versatility could be as much a weakness as a virtue though, if the Zafira's high and capacious body did not sit on a decent chassis adapted from the Astra.

It is probably not economically viable yet to design an MPV that does as much in the handling and ride department as it does in the passenger and load-carrying.

I can think of one or two that corner tightly but also clatter and crash even on a decent road, while there are many that offer a good side view of the road or the sky…depending on which way you are cornering.

But the Zafira is a good jack-of-all trades, unless you opt for the responsive VXR performance flagship, though I'm not convinced about the 'hot family bus' format.

The presence of the turbocharged 237bhp 2.0-litre petrol VXR – 0-60mph in 7.6 seconds - does at least highlight the spread of engines the Vauxhall offers. At the other extreme from the nutter's special though, there is a woefully inadequate 104bhp 1.6-litre petrol model reviewed previously that reminded me of a scene from Blackadder Goes Forth.

Faced with a life-size model of Field Marshal Haig's latest bloody and pointless advance across The Somme, our hero remarks that it

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FLEXIBLE: (top and below) Fold-flat Flexi-7 system is a hallmark of the Zafira's versatility

equates to the distance expected of an asthmatic ant carrying heavy shopping.

The enemy would know you were on the attack too in the junior Zafira – it ain't quiet – while the 0-60mph is quoted optimistically at 13.3 seconds; fill all seven seats and add luggage though and Blackadder's asthmatic ant could leave you in its slipstream.

And while the 1.6 averages nearly 40mpg officially, this must plummet as you stir the gearbox and pump the throttle to pursue that ant.

The 138bhp 1.8-litre petrol is better and, on paper, only slightly worse on fuel and there are further petrol options, but the diesels are the best bet and the 1.9-litre CDTi pair particularly.

These are available in 120 or 150PS output, with the latter (148bhp) being fitted to the high spec Design model tested here.

This has loads of low down punch and hits 60mph in 9.7 seconds; when paired with the Zafira's respectable chassis you quickly forget you are driving an MPV.

The same power is handy when the Zafira is asked to deliver its ultimate purpose, carrying seven people without fussing and panting, yet it should also deliver an average consumption of around 45mpg.

And where the original Zafira was dull inside and out, the current model has a practical yet distinctive shape and the same Teutonic interior look that has transformed recent Vauxhalls.

The layout and switches are not only logical and well arranged, but also high quality. To accentuate space in the front, the slick gearshift is mounted higher and close to the dashboard, while the 'cobra' handbrake lever also saves room.

No, the Zafira is not going to give up its midi-MPV crown easily.

DrivingStats

- Vauxhall Zafira 1.9 CDTi150 Design £22,825
- Range: £14,680-24,370
- Garage stats: 4.47m by 1.78m five-door midi-MPV
- Powertrain: 1,910cc/148bhp (150PS) four-cylinder turbodiesel driving front wheels through a six-speed manual gearbox
- Performance: top speed 126mph and 0-60mph in 9.7 seconds
- How green?: road tax band D (£125/year) – 159gm/km CO2 emissions
- Official fuel figures: combined 45.6mpg.
- Fuel tank: 58 litres/12.8 gallons.
- Insurance group: 9.
- Warranty: three years/60,000 miles.
- Website: www.vauxhall.co.uk
- Rivals: Citroen C4 Picasso, Ford S-Max, Mazda5, Kia Carens, Mitsubishi Grandis, Peugeot 308SW, Renault Grand Scenic, Seat Altea XL,Toyota Corolla Verso and VW Touran.

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CITROEN

C3, 1.1i Desire 5dr, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air con, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd. insurance group:2, blue, 16453 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

FORD

C-MAX, 1.8TDCi Titanium 5dr ng08hhr, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, balance of 3 year warranty, 18 alloys, rain sensing wipers, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, child locks, colour coding body, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking. insurance group: 8, grey, 25509 miles, £13995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

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C-MAX, 1.8TDCi Titanium 5dr, titanium x pack, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, 8 alloys, bluetooth, bluetooth handsfree and voice control, park assist, privacy glass, rain sensing wipers, solar reflect windscreen, xenon headlights, abs, air con, alloy wheels, central locking, colour coding body, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, heated screen, leather seats, leather upholstery, immobiliser, metallic, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, black, 3629 miles, £14695, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

C-MAX, 1.8 Titanium 5dr, abs, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, child locks, colour coding body, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking. insurance group: 8, silver, 26251 miles, £11995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

C-MAX, 2.0 Zetec 5dr Auto, ya07vbd, abs, air conditioning, alloy wheels, child locks, computer, driver airbag, foglights, front armrest, folding rear seats, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, lumbar support, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, seatback tables, side airbags, radio/cd, spoiler, rear headrests, tinted glass, blue, 7000 miles, £8695, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.4 Zetec 3dr [Climate], gk06pov, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, silver, 6754 miles, £6995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FIESTA, Sport Van, ly57aju, panel van, alloy wheels, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty, warrantied mileage, red, 4251 miles, £6999, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.4 Ghia 5dr - LEATHER, wu58jxy, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, leather seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, blue, 14077 miles, £9695, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.4 Ghia 5dr - LEATHER, da08ahx, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, leather seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, black, 12806 miles, £9695, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.6 TDCi Zetec S 3dr, gk08ujd, abs, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats, blue tooth, bluetooth voice control, foglights, locking wheel nuts, metallic paintwork. silver, 10679 miles, £8695, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 2.0 ST 3dr, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, leather seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd multichanger, rear headrests, sports seats, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, adjustable steering column/wheel, central locking, colour coding body, foglights, locking wheel nuts, metallic paintwork. insurance group:13, silver, 11307 miles, £8695, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

FIESTA, 1.4 Zetec 5dr [Climate], sm08eto, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year. insurance group:5, black, 14084 miles, £8995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

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FIESTA, 1.4 Zetec 3dr [Climate], gn57lwp, adjustable seats, air con, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, blue, 7734 miles, £6995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

FIESTA **SPORT VAN**, lv58gxl, alloy wheels, cd player, electric windows, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty. blue, 1801 miles, £8490, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

FIESTA 1400TDCI **NEW**, lv09smc, panel van, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty. blue, 40 miles, £6990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

FOCUS, 1.6 TDCi Studio 5dr **42 MPG COMBINED**, yh06kll, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, central locking, driver airbag, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, roof rails, radio/cassette, side airbags, rear headrests. insurance group:5, blue, 51578 miles, £6990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

FOCUS, 2.0 TDCi Titanium 3dr, air con, alloys, electric windows, side airbags, radio/cd, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, electric mirrors, power assisted steering, remote locking. insurance group:10, blue, 6574 miles, £14990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

FOCUS, 1.6 LX 5dr [115], adjustable seats, air conditioning, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:6, blue, 32661 miles, £6695, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

FOCUS, 1.6 Zetec 5dr - SOLD, na08xnz, air conditioning, alloy wheels, side airbags, radio/cd, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, central locking, child locks, colour coding body, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, metallic paintwork, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio, remote locking. insurance group:7, grey, 19863 miles, £9495, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

GALAXY, 2.0 TDCi Zetec 5dr Auto [140] - SOLD, ek57dhf, please call les bellchambers for more details, 11509 miles, £15995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

GALAXY, 1.8 TDCi Zetec 5dr [6] - FULL LEATHER, gj07ydc, 10559 miles, £13495, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

GALAXY, 2.0 TDCi Ghia 5dr***DVD NAVIGATION, BLUETOOTH ***, gk58vlu, bluetooth ***, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, bluetooth handsfree and voice control, demonstrator car, dvd navigation, park assist, parking sensors, privacy glass, rain sensing wipers, rear park assist, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, cd multichanger, central locking, child locks, cloth upholstery, colour coding body, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, multi function steering wheel, park distance control, passenger airbag, pearlescent paint, power assisted steering, radio, remote locking, silver, 5560 miles, £18495, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

KA, 1.3 TDCi Zetec 3dr, gf58zdw, metalliccdive, abs, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, foglights, folding rear seats, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio/cd, rear headrests, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, central locking, privacy glass, adjustable seats, alloy wheels, child locks, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, remote locking. insurance group:2, blue, 2500 miles, £9995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

KA, 1.3i Zetec [70] 3dr [Climate], bf08xat, metallic panther. abs, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, remote locking, rear headrests, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, central locking, colour coding body, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, black, 6128 miles, £6995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

KA, 1.3i Collection [70] 3dr, gy55lya, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:3, blue, 21948 miles, £4695, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

KA, 1.3i Zetec [70] 3dr [Climate], lv08jwe, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, remote locking, rear headrests. insurance group:4, blue, 4701 miles, £6995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

KA, 1.3i [70] 3dr **ONLY 12115 MILES+ GROUP 2 INSUR.**, gl56czb, driver airbag, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, radio/cassette. insurance group:2, blue, 12115 miles, £4490, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

KA, 1.3i [70] 3dr, gj05yfg, driver airbag, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, radio/cassette. insurance group:2, silver, 11197 miles, £3990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

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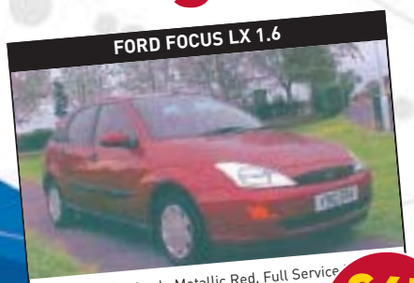
FORD FOCUS LX 1.6
01/Y, 5dr, Hatchack, Metallic Red, Full Service History, 1 Owner, Power Steering, Elec Windows, ABS, 30,000 Miles, 01234 5678

£19.50 3x1 Box Ad p/w

3x1
Max. 25 words

FORD FOCUS LX 1.6



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*Source: Independent Market Research Sagitta Consultancy 2006. **Source: B E Stats June 2008.

MONDEO, 2.0 TDCi Zetec 5dr eo08ohx, contact the used car team for more help, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, child locks, cloth upholstery, climate control, colour coding body, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, multi function steering wheel, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio, remote locking. insurance group:8, silver, 15869 miles, £12995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0 TDCi Titanium X 5dr, hn08nuh, metallic thunder. with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, 18 alloys, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, colour coding body, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, heated seats, limited slip differential, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, multi function steering wheel, passenger airbag, pearlescent paint, power assisted steering. insurance group:9, grey, 23913 miles, £14495, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0 TDCi Zetec 5dr **SPORTS PACK**, wm08obr, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, electric mirrors, electric windows, remote locking, 18 alloy wheel upgrade, climate controlled air conditioning, electric heated door mirrors, esp traction control, global opening and closing, heated front windscreen, child locks, colour coding body, foglights, front armrest, folding rear seats, locking wheel nuts, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:8, silver, 15467 miles, £12990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0 TDCi Edge 5dr, kg57nme, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, electric mirrors, electric windows, power assisted steering, remote locking. insurance group:8, blue, 17431 miles, £11990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0 Zetec 5dr ***SPORTS PACK***, air con, alloys, central locking, electric windows, radio/cd, 18 alloy wheel upgrade, climate controlled air conditioning, electric heated door mirrors, esp traction control, heated front windscreen, power fold mirrors, privacy glass, child locks, colour coding body, driver airbag, foglights, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio, remote locking, side airbags, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:8, silver, 22328 miles, £12490, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 1.8 LX 5dr, gy54lcx, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:8, black, 35087 miles, £4990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0 Titanium X 5dr *****18 WHEELS*****, air con, alloy wheels, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, heated seats, leather seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, rear armrest, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd multichanger, rear headrests, sports seats, traction control, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, 18 alloys, privacy glass, central locking, child locks, colour coding body, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, metallic paintwork, multi function steering, grey, 11000 miles, £12995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 2.0 TDCi Titanium X 5dr **SPORT PACK BLUETOOTH **, kx57hvh, 25345 miles, £14495, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

MONDEO, 1.8 TDCi Zetec 5dr [6] ***SPORTS PACK***, ov08lkg, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, remote locking, radio/cd, 18 alloy wheel upgrade, climate controlled air conditioning, electric heated door mirrors, esp traction control, heated front windscreen, child locks, colour coding body, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, head restraints, folding rear seats, heated screen, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio, side airbags, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:7, black, 27675 miles, £12990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

RANGER, Pick Up XLT Thunder Double Cab TD 4WD, 143 bhp, double cab, max weight 2985 kg, max pulling weight 3000 kg. alloy wheels, cat 1 alarm, reverse parking sensors, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty, warrantied mileage. 5 seater, brand new 09 -not pre-reg.please call steve wales in our commercial department contract hire available from, black, 5 miles, £12999, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

RANGER, TIPPER, ac58efw, 143 ps, tipper, max weight 875 kg, max pulling weight 3000 kg, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty, warrantied mileage, white, 25 miles, £10959, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

RANGER, Pick Up XLT Thunder Double Cab TD 4WD, lv58kmz, 56 ps, max weight 2985 kg, max pulling weight 3000 kg, cat alarm, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, one tax, warrantied mileage, reverse parking sensors. 5 seater, 20 alloy wheels please call steve wales in our commercial department, silver, 1005 miles, £13995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

RANGER, Pick Up Wildtrak Double Cab TD 4WD, 156 ps, max weight 2985 kg, max pulling weight 3000 kg. alloy wheels, cat 1 alarm, reverse parking sensors, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty, warrantied mileage. 5 seater, blue, 8 miles, £14645, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

RANGER, Pick Up XLT Thunder Double Cab TD 4WD, 156 bhp, cat 1 alarm, reverse parking sensors, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty, warrantied mileage. 5 seater, silver, 10 miles, £13999, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

RANGER, Pick Up Regular TD 4WD**TIPPER**, ac58eka, warrantied mileage. white, 30 miles, £10990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

RANGER, Pick Up XLT Thunder Double Cab **AUTO + 20 ALLOY*, lv58kmz, 156 ps, double cab, air conditioning, alloy wheels, cd player, electric windows, full leather, rear park assist, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty. 5 seater, silver, 100 miles, £14990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

S-MAX, 2.0 TDCi Titanium 5dr Auto, ad08xpb, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:11, grey, 16343 miles, £15990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

S-MAX, 1.8 TDCi LX 5dr [5], ng07alu, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:10, blue, 37668 miles, £11990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

S-MAX, 2.0 TDCi Titanium 5dr [140] Auto*DVD NAV+X PACK*, gf58bpy, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats, panoramic roof, sony 6cd player, with over 400 ford cars in stock today, contact the used car team for more help, all vehicles come with balance of 3 year, 18 alloys, bluetooth handsfree and voice control, dvd sat nav, park assist, parking sensors, privacy glass, rain sensing wipers, rear park assist, xenon headlights, air condit, silver, 9350 miles, £20495, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

S-MAX, 1.8 TDCi Titanium 5dr [5], ek08djv, alloy wheels, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd multichanger, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:10, black, 5849 miles, £17990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

TRANSIT **BRAND NEW, 09, panel van, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty. white, 0 miles, £7695, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

TRANSIT CONNECT, gl09smc, panel van, cd player, remote locking, finance available, full dealer facilities, pcp, swb. white, 50 miles, £7995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

TRANSIT CONNECT, gl09smc, panel van, cd player, remote locking. white, 100 miles, £9995, Sittingbourne, 01795 426693 (TRADE)

HONDA

CIVIC, 2.2 i-CTDi Sport 5dr, oe56ewl, alloy wheels, climate control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, front armrest, head restraints, headlight washers, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, traction control. insurance group:10, silver, 31000 miles, £10995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

HYUNDAI

GETZ, 1.1 GSI 3dr, gf05cwu, abs, adjustable steering column/wheel, central locking, driver airbag, folding rear seats, electric windows, immobiliser, passenger airbag, radio/cd, power assisted steering. insurance group:3, red, 40000 miles, £3495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

KIA

PICANTO, 1.1 LS 5dr, gj57cdu, abs, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, central locking, driver airbag, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:3, red, 19232 miles, £4495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

MAZDA

BT-50, lx08ymg, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, warranty, warrantied mileage, silver, 3468 miles, £7999, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

MERCEDES-BENZ

A150, Avantgarde SE Automatic, 2009, jupiter red, 3530 miles, £15497, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

A150, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2009, polar silver metallic, 5000 miles, £15332, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

A150, 5 DOOR Elegance SE, 2009, steppe brown metallic, 3000 miles, £16498, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

A150, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2009, mountain grey metallic, 4000 miles, £14712, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

A160, 5dr Classic SE, 2009, cosmos black metallic, 3000 miles, £13998, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

A160 CDI, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2008, polar silver metallic, 3000 miles, £11995, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

A160 CDI, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2009, cosmos black metallic, 5000 miles, £15480, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

A160 CDI, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2009, mistral blue, 5000 miles, £14980, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

A160 CDI, Classic SE Auto 5 DR Classic SE, 2005, tropic black metallic, 25016 miles, £8480, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

A160 CDI, 5 DR CLASSIC SE ***REDUCED***, 2008, horizon blue metallic, 5000 miles, £13698, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

A160 CDI, 5 DOOR Classic SE, 2008, polar silver metallic, 5000 miles, £13997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

A180 CDI, Classic SE Manual 5 DR Classic SE, 2006, atoll blue metallic, 27024 miles, £8997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

A180 CDI, Avantgarde SE Manual 5 DR Avantgarde SE, 2006, comet grey, metallic, 31110 miles, £10997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

A180 CDI, Classic SE Manual 5 DR Classic SE, 2006, atoll blue metallic, 28143 miles, £9997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

A180 CDI, 5 DOOR Avantgarde SE, 2009, lotus blue metallic, 1500 miles, £17901, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E200 KOMPRESSOR, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 11853 miles, £18447, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, 2009, iridium silver metallic, 520 miles, £29997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, obsidian black metallic, 21363 miles, £19997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, columbite black metallic, 14444 miles, £19997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2008, iridium silver metallic, 5900 miles, £23500, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 25944 miles, £18997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Classic, 2007, obsidian black metallic, 16200 miles, £18997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 12998 miles, £24997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, 2009, iridium silver metallic, 500 miles, £28997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, obsidian black metallic, 14707 miles, £21990, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Classic, 2007, palladium silver metallic, 10024 miles, £20470, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde Auto EU4 Avantgarde, 2005, flint grey metallic, 40577 miles, £14690, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde Auto Avantgarde, 2006, iridium silver metallic, 35764 miles, £17980, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde Auto EU4 Avantgarde, 2005, iridium silver metallic, 36163 miles, £14490, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2008, iridium silver metallic, 8377 miles, £22399, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, 2009, iridium silver metallic, 3000 miles, £26998, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2008, iridium silver metallic, 10203 miles, £21998, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, teallite blue metallic, 14637 miles, £17880, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 8162 miles, £22500, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 16061 miles, £18298, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, 2009, obsidian black metallic, 3000 miles, £26768, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

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2004 04 **SAAB 9-3 1.9TiD Linear**, 4 Doors, Manual, Saloon, Diesel, 47,000 miles, Metallic Steel Grey. ABS, Air con, Alarm, Alloys, Audio remote control, Body coloured bumpers, Full Service History, Drivers airbag, Full Electric pack, Immobiliser, Park distance control, Isofix child seat anchor points, PAS, Passenger airbag, Radio/CD, Remote central locking, Service indicator, Side airbags, Solid Paint, Traction control **£8,000**

2002 52 **SAAB 9-5 2.3HOT Aero**, 4 Doors, Manual, Saloon, Petrol, 63,260 miles, Steel Grey. ABS, Alloys, Cruise control, Heated seats, Full Electric pack, Park distance control, Remote locking, Side airbags, Sports seats, Traction control, Climate control, In Car Entertainment, Warranty, Leather upholstery, Met paintwork, Tinted glass **£5,495**

2005 55 **RENAULT Scenic 1.4 Dynamique,** 5 Doors, Manual, Estate, Petrol, 29,889 miles, Metallic Green. Rear wiper, Air conditioning, Heated door mirrors, Lumbar support, Side airbags, Front electric windows, Alloy wheels, Immobiliser, Electric door mirrors, Rear electric windows, ABS, Cloth seat trim, Isofix child seat anchor points, Front fog lights, Passenger airbag, Remote central locking, Drivers airbag, Trip computer, Alarm, Body coloured bumpers, PAS. Insurance Group:4 ..... **£5,000**

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(06) **KIA PICANTO 1.1 LX**, 5 Dr, Met.Blue, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, CD, Player, 1 Owner, ONLY 1500 MILES, S/History, Ins. Grp 3 ..... **£4995**
(03) **HONDA JAZZ 1.4 SE**, 5 Dr, Met.Pale Green, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, Honda+1 Owner, ONLY 26000 MILES, S/History, Ins. Grp 3 ..... **£4995**
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(03) **TOYOTA YARIS 1.3 SR**, 3 Dr, Silver, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, Alloys, CD Player, 29700 Miles, S/History, Ins. Grp 5, RFL £120 p.a. **£4995**
(54) **MAZDA PREMACY 1.8 GXI**, 5 Dr, Met.Red, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, Traction Control, ONLY 20700 Miles, S/History, Ins. Grp 6 ..... **£4995**
(55) **KIA PICANTO 1.1 LX**, 5 Dr, Red, Air Conditioning, PAS, Remote C/Locking, E/Windows, ABS, CD Player, 1 Owner, ONLY 6000 MILES, S/History, Ins. Grp 3, RFL £120 p.a **£4695**
(52) **HONDA CIVIC 1.4 S**, 5 Dr, Silver, Air Conditioning, Power Steering, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, 28100 Miles, 5 Service Stamps, Ins. Grp 4 ..... **£4495**
(04) **MAZDA 323 1.6 GXI**, 5 Dr, White, Air Conditioning, Power Steering, Remote C/Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, 40000 Miles, 2 Owners, Part Service History, Ins. Grp 7 ..... **£4295**
(54) **HYUNDAI GETZ 1.1 GSI**, 3 Dr, Silver, Power Steering, Central Locking, E/F/Windows, ABS, CD, ONLY 15000 Miles, 1 Owner, Service History, Ins. Grp 4, RFL £120 p.a. **£3795**

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MERCEDES-BENZ

E220 CDI, 2009, iridium silver metallic, 3000 miles, £25768, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Classic Auto EU4 Classic, 2005, brilliant silver metallic, 35087 miles, £13998, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2008, iridium silver metallic, 7419 miles, £22484, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 24100 miles, £19845, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 19258 miles, £20270, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, tansanite blue metallic, 6825 miles, £23000, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde Auto Avantgarde, 2006, iridium silver metallic, 26570 miles, £21449, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde Auto EU4 Avantgarde, 2005, brilliant silver metallic, 45182 miles, £14000, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, indium grey metallic, 17721 miles, £19999, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E220 CDI, Avantgarde, 2007, tenorite grey metallic, 17664 miles, £20270, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E270 CDI, Avantgarde Auto Avantgarde, 2004, obsidian black metallic, 62549 miles, £11498, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

E280 CDI, Sport, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 15438 miles, £23448, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

E280 CDI, 2009, iridium silver metallic, 3000 miles, £29698, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

E320 CDI, Avantgarde Sal Auto Avantgarde, 2005, obsidian black metallic, 44040 miles, £15994, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E320 CDI, Sport, 2007, cubanite silver metallic, 42584 miles, £22000, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

E320 CDI, 2009, obsidian black metallic, 4000 miles, £34989, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

ML280 CDI, Sport, 2007, obsidian black metallic, 21372 miles, £25290, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

ML280 CDI, Sport, 2009, obsidian black metallic, 2000 miles, £37824, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

R320 CDI, LWB Sport, 2007, obsidian black metallic, 20418 miles, £24998, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

R320 CDI, LWB Sport, 2008, iridium silver metallic, 1095 miles, £30998, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

R320 CDI, LWB Sport, 2007, iridium silver metallic, 13074 miles, £25784, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

S320 CDI, 2006, carneol red metallic, 28609 miles, £29997, Ashford, 0845 481 6427 (TRADE)

SL350, 2006, iridium silver metallic, 33448 miles, £33448, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

SLK200 KOMPRESSOR, 2006, iridium silver metallic, 20443 miles, £20390, Maidstone, 0845 481 6487 (TRADE)

SLK200 KOMPRESSOR, 2009, obsidian black metallic, 2000 miles, £29946, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

SLK200 KOMPRESSOR, 2008, iridium silver metallic, 2100 miles, £30424, Tonbridge, 0845 481 6497 (TRADE)

SLK200 KOMPRESSOR, 2006, iridium silver metallic, 5992 miles, £19898, Canterbury, 0845 481 6437 (TRADE)

VITO, 111cdi xlong 2.2, ey04phz, panel van, mot-10-2009. electric windows, factory fitted bulk head, finance available, full dealer facilities, hp+leasing, lwb. red, 57500 miles, £5990, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

MITSUBISHI

COLT, 1.5 CZC3 2dr, gf09kz0, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, leather seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd. insurance group:7, silver, 50 miles, £10999, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

COLT, 1.1 Mirage 3dr, gf55kyj, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:4, grey, 11675 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

COLT, 1.5 CZC3 2dr *Delivery Miles Only*, gf09kzm, abs, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, leather seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd. insurance group:7, blue, 50 miles, £10999, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

COLT, 1.1 Blue 3dr, alloys, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:3, blue, 22000 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

I-CAR, 5dr Auto, abs, adjustable seats, air con, alloys, anti theft system, central locking, cloth upholstery, colour coding body, colour coding interior, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, folding rear seats, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, metallic paintwork, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio, remote locking, tinted glass. insurance group:4, saving, silver, 500 miles, £7993, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

L200, 2.5 Di-D Warrior Double Cab, dy07ovb, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air con, alloy wheels, anti theft system, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, power assisted steering, remote locking, traction control. grey, 34000 miles, £10495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

OUTLANDER, II 2.0 DI-DC Warrior 5dr *Leather*, ellectric mirrors, leather gearknob, tinted windows, airbag double + side, cd player, fog lights, electricdoor mirrors, metallic paint, leather steering wheel, 18 light alloy wheels, adjustable seat height, air-conditioning, boardcomputer, silver, 3000 miles, £18495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

OUTLANDER, II 2.0 DI-DC Warrior 5dr, abs, air con, alloy wheels, anti theft system, central locking, climate control, computer, cruise control, dvd, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, multi function steering wheel, power assisted steering. insurance group:11, silver, 17300 miles, £15895, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

OUTLANDER, II 2.0 DI-DC Elegance 5dr, lv58bhl, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, anti theft system, central locking, climate control, computer, cruise control, electric mirrors, electric windows, extra seats, electric sunroof, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, heated seats, leather seats, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, navigation system, park distance control, remote locking, sunroof. insurance group:12, blue, 6500 miles, £20995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

PEUGEOT

107, 1.0 Sport XS 3dr, gj07tuv, abs, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric windows, front armrest, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, rear armrest, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:1, stripes. was, black, 9800 miles, £6695, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

207, 1.6 HDi 90 Sport 3dr, abs, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:5, blue, 18000 miles, £7995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

207, 1.4 Urban 3dr, gk57vxn, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, computer, driver airbag, folding rear seats, electric windows, immobiliser, head restraints, passenger airbag, radio/cd, power assisted steering, rear headrests, remote locking, side airbags. insurance group:3, blue, 4587 miles, £6495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

RENAULT

CLIO, 1.2 16V Dynamique 3dr [AC], gf55gsy, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, computer, driver airbag, folding rear seats, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, immobiliser, head restraints, passenger airbag, radio/cd, power assisted steering, rear headrests, remote locking, side airbags, sports seats, sunroof. insurance group:3, silver, 14615 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

CLIO, 1.2 16V Campus Sport i-music 2007 3dr, al56law, abs, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:3, blue, 16000 miles, £5495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2008, silver metallic, 3000 miles, £8199, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2006, sugar candy pink, 7262 miles, £6999, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2008, blue metallic, 7400 miles, £7990, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2008, deep black, 7600 miles, £7990, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2007, lite white, 5900 miles, £6180, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2008, crystal white, 5500 miles, £8199, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

FORTWO COUPÉ PASSION, 2007, lite white, 16300 miles, £5999, Maidstone, 0845 481 6488 (TRADE)

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IMPREZA, 2.0 WRX AWD Turbo 4dr, ek54jvv, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, side airbags, radio/cd, sports seats. insurance group:20, blue, 31500 miles, £8995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

SUZUKI

IGNIS, 1.3 GL 5dr, lx56rzk, adjustable seats, central locking, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, roof rails, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, grey, 18000 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

SWIFT, 1.5 GLX 5dr, gf06mrx, abs, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group: 6, grey, 17000 miles, £6995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

TOYOTA

YARIS, 1.0 VVT-i Colour Collection 3dr, lx55xsj, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:2, silver, 26000 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

VAUXHALL

ASTRA, 1.6i 16V SXi Digital 5dr, eo55hym, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd multichanger, rear headrests, sports seats. insurance group:6, black, 23000 miles, £6995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

CORSA, 1.4i 16V SXi 5dr Auto [AC], vn07ons, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, folding rear seats, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, passenger airbag, radio/cd, power assisted steering, rear headrests, remote locking, side airbags, sports seats. insurance group:4, black, 15000 miles, £8895, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

VOLKSWAGEN

GOLF, 2.0 GT TDI 5dr, wg55wln, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, climate control, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats, traction control. insurance group:13, grey, 31300 miles, £10995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

VOLVO

V40, 2.0T SE 5dr Auto, gf03vnk, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, leather seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, rear armrest, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:14, black, 65000 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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Bike dealers count blessings while car sites feel more pain

by STEVELOADER

SALES DOWN: Scooter sector flattened while big bikes weather the storm

MOTORCYCLE registrations are just 6.5 per cent down on April, 2008, according to figures issued by the Motor Cycle Industry Association.

And while the overall powered two-wheeler (PTW) market – including mopeds and scooters – is 12.4 per cent down on the same month last year, the MCIA is quick to stress that this was better than the car market's 24 per cent stumble in April.

Loss of volume in the scooter/moped sector – the source of new recruits to two-wheeled travel – is also tempered by higher registrations at the 651-1,000cc enthusiast end of the market.

Naked (unfaired) and custom bike styles were up 32.4 and 2.6 per cent respectively, with the Honda CBF 125 M and Harley-Davidson Dyna Fat Bob the top sellers in these categories.

The biggest selling manufacturer in April was Yamaha, followed by Honda and Suzuki.

"The market is demonstrating its resilience in the face of continued economic uncertainty," said Sheila Rainger of the MCIA.

"The continued popularity of the naked motorcycle, and the dominance within that category of a learner-legal practical machine, suggests people are looking for multi-purpose bikes that combine fun with utility, and can take the place of a second household car.

"The double whammy of a two pence rise in fuel duty in September, coupled with the reintroduction of the fuel duty escalator from next spring, will make PTW use even more attractive as an economic alternative to a wallet-draining commute by four wheels or by public transport. There has probably never been a stronger reason to switch to two wheels."

A major factor likely to influence the market for the rest of the year is the introduction of the new motorcycle test, run for the first time at the end of April.

The new test is part of a package of changes that will make it more complex to gain a PTW licence. The Motorcycle Industry's Training Association (MCITA) website is currently hosting a video – http://www.mcita.co.uk/public/newtest.aspx?OBJ_ID=1037817 – which explains the new test in more detail.

The MCIA is also repeating its annual National Motorcycle Week to highlight the benefits of motorcycling – it is from July 12-18 this year, with Ride to Work Day on July 15.

IMPORT: The Yamaha YBR250 has thrived on the Continent and is now on its way here

Yamaha bows to customer power

YAMAHA has yielded to customer demand and started importing the mid-range YBR250 that has proved so popular in mainland Europe.

The single cylinder 250cc four-stroke bike is touted as the answer for riders who like geared bikes, but also want to bridge the gap between 125 and 600cc machinery.

The YBR250 is economical, attracts low insurance premiums, is easy to ride and has a low seat height (805mm).

Priced at £3,399, the YBR is available in silver or black.

However, it is not included in UK market leader's £99 down three-year zero per cent finance promotion until the end of June, although this does include some of the hottest properties around – many of which helped increase big bike sales in April.

Models included in the promotion are: YZF-R6- FZ6 S2- FZ6 S2 Fazer- FZ6 S2 Fazer ABS- FZ1-FZ1 ABS - FZ1 Fazer - FZ1 Fazer ABS- XT660Z Tenere - XT660X- XT660R- FJR1300A- XJR1300- XVS950- XVS1300A- XV1900.

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The temperature is rising and Yamaha are following that theme with the hottest deals around.

Until the end of June, Yamaha are offering some hot finance deals on some of the best bikes available.

From the amazing YZF-R6 through the adventure class XT660Z Ténéré to the ultimate sport-tourer FJR1300A, with 3 years to pay, no interest and only £99 down, you can make sure that you are armed with a brand new Yamaha to make the best of the BBQ Summer we are just about to experience.

Promotion Details

The maximum advance for the promotion is the Suggested Retail Price including 1st registration fee and vehicle excise duty, minus applicable deposit.

A minimum deposit of £99 is required on all models.

Finance available:
0% 36months
3% 48months
4% 60months

The finance promotion ends on Tuesday 30th June 2009.

Finance Example:

Model	Price	Deposit**	Advance	Monthly Payment	Total Payable	Typical APR
FZ6 S2 Faze	£6,402.00*	£2,838.00	£3,564.00	£99.00 x 36 months	£6,402.00	0%
XVS950A	£7,120.00*	£2,476.00	£4,644.00	£129.00 x 36 months	£7,120.00	0%
XT660Z	£5,754.00*	£99.00 (min)	£5,654.00	£157.08 x 35 months £157.20 final payment	£5,754.00	0%

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Green shoots to nurture

By **TONY PATEY**
tony.patey@kosmedia.co.uk

LITTLE, tiny, miniscule green shoots at last! Business confidence is starting to come back – and that is a main force for kick-starting the economic engine out of recession.

The latest Business Outlook Survey by KPMG, whose Gatwick office covers Kent, which checks out 2,500 service sector firms across the EU, showed a marked improvement in business confidence in the UK after the record lows at the end of 2008.

The news came in a week when leading central bankers signaled that they thought the world economy had bottomed out with some national economies already looking towards renewed growth.

The survey showed that despite remaining historically weak, expectations for activity, revenues and new orders were all much higher than six months ago.

Although business sentiment improved in April, profitability growth is forecast to be only modest, in line with subdued pricing power in the sector and further cost increases.

Confidence

Reflecting understandable caution given the difficulty in assessing the economic outlook, 12-month forecasts for employment and investment remain negative.

About 44 per cent of the survey panel signalled expectations that business activity will be higher than present levels in 12 months' time.

When this was reflected in data, it showed the highest level for a year-and-a-half and a considerable improvement on the series low registered last October.

Moreover, the latest reading was the second highest in the EU – only Italy had a higher net balance in April.

Supporting the improvement in confidence with regards to activity was a similar rise in expectations for incoming new business.

Respondents are expecting sales levels to be higher in a year's time, reflecting hopes that low interest rates, weak sterling and an improvement in the property market will all support economic recovery.

Forecasts for revenues are also higher than six months ago, albeit to lesser extents than for activity and sales. Profitability growth is forecast to remain relatively subdued, however, with relatively few expecting an improvement in their profits position in the next 12 months.

Although trends in activity, revenues and profitability are all forecast to improve, many companies continue to adopt a cautious attitude to investment and employment, especially given the severity of the downturn since the second half of 2008.

Capital investment in services is expected to decline overall in the next 12 months, albeit to a lesser extent than was forecast six months ago. For employment, around 21 per cent of respondents expect to reduce staffing numbers in the coming year, compared with 20 per cent that forecast growth.

Mike Stevens, partner and head of business services at KPMG, said: "April's survey indicated marked improvements in confidence for a number of key indicators, providing further hope that the worst of the recession in the key UK service sector is now behind us.

"Much as we hesitate to talk of green shoots when employment expectations and other contributors to consumer confidence remain poor, confidence in the UK service sector is stronger than in the Eurozone as a whole.

"The bad news is that UK service companies do expect a further decline in employment and capital spending. The good news, however, is that they are expecting an increase in business activity, new business opportunities and profits."

Slowdown in number of firms going bust reported

THE number of businesses going bust in the South East slowed down during the first three months of this year compared with the previous quarter.

Leading business information provider Equifax, in its latest Business Failures Report for the first quarter of this year, showed the South East saw only a 6.5 per cent increase in businesses failing, compared with the last three months of 2008.

Compared with the first three months of 2008, the increase was 47.5 per cent, beaten only by the North East and Wales.

Nationally, the year-on-year increase was 35 per cent, while compared with the previous three months there was an increase of just 3.3 per cent.

"It is hardly surprising that year on year the level of failures has increased so significantly," said external affairs director Neil Munroe. "At the beginning of last year we were only just starting to see the impact of the credit crunch and certainly the word 'recession' had not yet been uttered.

"But obviously things have been very different at the start of this year, with consumer confidence struggling to lift. However, what we do seem to be seeing is a slowdown in what was a runaway train of failures at the end of last year.

"It would be immensely dangerous to take too much from just one quarter's performance, but it is a useful benchmark to watch in the coming months.

"But the bottom line is that our latest figures reinforce the fact that the variety of Government and private sector initiatives still have a long way to go.

"Indeed, there is a risk that as we head into the new tax year we might even see the numbers creep up again as some businesses find it impossible to stay ahead of their creditors – including the tax man.

"It is clear more action is needed from Government and the banks to inject funds into the economy as a whole, both to encourage consumers and help businesses with cash-flow support."

Not surprisingly, the construction sector continued to report the greatest level of increase, year on year, in failures, with 65.2 per cent more businesses folding in the first quarter compared with the same period last year.

But when compared with the last quarter in 2008, it appears the downturn for the building industries may be reaching the bottom with just a 15.3 per cent increase.

Increases

The manufacturing and retail sectors also saw quite significant year-on-year increases in failures at 44.4 per cent and 44.8 per cent respectively. But for both sectors the trend wasn't quite so severe when compared with the last three months in 2008 with increases of just 13.7 per cent and 13.6 per cent respectively.

The services sector seems to be performing the best, both in terms of year-on-year comparisons and compared with the last quarter of 2008.

Business failures year on year increased by 15.7 per cent, but there was a 9.4 per cent drop in comparison with the previous quarter.

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Bluestar welcomes System C merger

By TONY PATEY
tony.patey@kosmedia.co.uk

M&As – mergers and acquisitions – and MBOs – management buy-outs – are alive and well and definitely kicking in Kent despite the recession.

Just announced is a major £3 million healthcare IT sector takeover, with Maidstone-based System C Healthcare snapping up Wrotham Heath-based Bluestar UK Group.

System C, which is listed on the AIM (Alternative Investment Market) share exchange, says it intends to use its scale and market presence to bring Bluestar's technologies to a wider audience and to complement its own products and services.

Ian Denley, System C's chief executive, said: "This is an excellent acquisition for us because it brings us a range of exciting healthcare technologies and products and further strengthens our healthcare consulting capabilities."

One of Kent's leading accountancy firms, Horwath Clark Whitehill (HCW), which has offices in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells, played a key role in helping System C during the takeover.

Geert Struyven, a corporate finance partner for HCW, said: "This was our first corporate finance assignment for System C and we were very impressed with their in-house finance team. They had carried out their own due diligence on Bluestar prior to our appointment and gave us clear instructions of where they thought the potential risks were and which areas they initially wanted us to focus our work on.

"However, they were also very keen on hearing our views on which other areas we thought our work should cover. I think we worked well together as a team and I look forward to further opportunities to work with System C."

Despite the downturn, HCW's corporate finance team has been working on mergers and acquisitions, with other recent transactions in the healthcare industry alone including Prime Care Holdings, Mirada Medical and Forth Photonics.

HCW also recently carried out the due diligence on the management buy-in buy-out of Diagnos on behalf of Kent-based venture capital firm Foresight Venture Partners and Octopus Intermediate Capital.

Diagnos is a developer of diagnostic software for the car servicing industry whose flagship product, Autologic, helps workshops service high-end cars including Mercedes, Porsche, BMW, Jaguar and Land Rover.

The deal was backed by Foresight Group with £3.75m of equity finance, alongside £3m of debt from Octopus Intermediate Capital.

Mr Struyven said: "These examples show there is still an appetite in the market to acquire or invest in businesses and that financial backing is still available for the right propositions. We are working with a variety of investors and acquirers to identify further opportunities for them."

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Where art meets commerce

WORKS of art are being shown at a new exhibition at Kings Hill, West Malling, organised by the site's developer, Liberty Property Trust UK, and national charity Arts & Business.

Sculptures, paintings, photographs and prints on display are a selection of works by seven artists from London and the South East including Sandgate's Nicholette Goff and Joanna Jones from Dover.

The exhibition, the second of its kind to be held there, is housed in reception areas of five of the business park's flagship buildings. It was launched with a private viewing and will be on display until mid-June.

Caroline Binns, associate director marketing and leasing of Liberty Property Trust UK Ltd, said: "This adds a fresh dimension to the business environment and builds upon our wider initiatives to link the worlds of art and commerce.

"This includes the curators of the exhibitions liaising with Kings Hill businesses and their employees to encourage other arts initiatives, such as engaging an artist in residence.

"Employees and the public are welcome to visit www.kings-hill.com/working/art.html to find out more about the artists and to purchase direct from them or through the curators."

Liberty Property Trust UK founded the Rouse Kent Public Art Award with Kent County Council for the best piece of public art in the county. Janet Street-Porter will chair the 2009 judging panel.

DISPLAY: Sandgate artist Nicholette Goff

Musa banks on hat-trick

ENTREPRENEUR Musa Kivrak is bucking the economic trend by achieving a hat-trick and opening his third business, Mexican restaurant Tacos Locos in Canterbury, funded with support from NatWest Bank.

Mr Kivrak previously owned the Stone Court hotel in Maidstone. Tacos Locos has 70 covers and has created 25 jobs. NatWest said Tacos Locos was just one of many businesses it was helping through the financial downturn.

Now SWOT up on your sales team

SALES training is not an exact science and should be structured for each individual business or organisation, ***writes Tony Patey***.

A firm exists on being able to sell products or services to customers – once the customers know of their existence, which is where the whole area of marketing is involved.

However, knowing how, when and who will do the selling is the key point. Many new business owners do the job themselves, but it soon becomes apparent they need experienced staff.

The cost-effectiveness of bringing in new sales staff – or, in a downturn, getting rid of them – is a headache, because no-one knows what the future holds. Take the wrong decision, which may seem right at the time, and your business suffers.

If a business already has a sales team, it's important to know how to motivate them and measure their performance. Initial motivation may be done in-house or through an outside training provider.

Whichever way, new salespeople will need to get to know your business; its products, its employees and its customers. So, this means an induction process. Again, whoever provides it will cover:

• Where you are in your industry – basic to detailed knowledge of your business sector, your position in it, who your competitors and rivals are, and where they're positioned.

• Complete familiarity with your products, especially their USPs – their unique selling points – and their branding, and what your rivals offer.

• Who your customers are – and who you'd like to target in future. You should have detailed lists or databases of customers with their needs.

• Where you want to be in the future – your aims, objectives and strategies. At this stage you might do some market mapping, detailing your future directions, and, perhaps, also do a SWOT – a survey of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Okay, so the sales team is out on the road, and pumping. How do you measure their performance?

One method is to look at conversion rates. How many sales they've closed compared with number of visits, contacts and phone calls, especially for each individual customer, so you can assess which salespeople are performing most effectively and efficiently.

Realistic targets should be set and if they are consistently missed,they should be reassessed, or individual salespeople taken aside.

Has the salesperson got a personal problem? Is his or her territory too big, or does it have specific problems?

Is there a problem with the product (in which case feedback really should have already been given)? Or is there a problem with the market in general?

How can you find out if your salespeople are making the right impression? Diplomatic contact with customers, perhaps on the excuse of letting them know about a new product, or even going out with the sales team might help.

The key thing is to let the sales team know everyone is being involved in the exercise and individuals are not being singled out.

How the tough get going

IN A recession the going gets tough – and the tough get going.

Selling and cashflow go right to the top of agendas for bosses who want to stay afloat. But sales teams need to be effectively organised – and trained – if they're going to reap full rewards and contribute directly to the bottom line.

Firms which sell direct to the public quite often have structured in-house sales training schemes. Salespeople need to know the product inside out,and they also have to know how to apply psychology.

For example, double-glazing salespeople not only need to know the finer details of the product specification, they also have to be able to work out what a customers needs and can afford and then seal the deal. A good salesperson can sell almost anything because he or she sets up a sale situation so they listen to what a customer is seeking and then they tailor how they present their products so they meet those needs.

It's different in a business-to-business sale, because the salesperson needs to have a very high level of specialist knowledge, a general business background and quite often a deeper insight into customer needs. Selling needs to be seen as part of the overall marketing aims, objectives and strategies of each firm – very much as PR should also be an integral part of the marketing function.

However, research by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and Nord Anglia has shown that 51 per cent of companies want to target their training more effectively to get a maximum return on resources.

CBI director general Richard Lambert – a one-time editor of the Financial Times – said: "During turbulent times, it would be understandable if firms have to reduce their training budgets but this survey shows they are most concerned with getting more value from their training."

Like many other experts, he stresses that better training for staff now will place firms in a more competitive position when the upturn comes, as it will.

The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform is merging its Train to Gain and Business Link services, to more efficiently provide sales managers and their companies with free advice and support. Lord Young, the skills and apprenticeships minister, said the new service will "facilitate quick and easy access to help".

Thanks a million for good advice

ONE million people have benefited from the Train to Gain initiative. It's a Government service of the Learning Skills Council offering independent advice on improving skills of employees.

The aim is to help employers of all sizes and in all sectors to boost business by training staff.

Independent business brokers at Business Link help find the right training and the right providers, and construct a training package tailored to each business.

If there is an established relationship with a training provider it can still be involved if it has a contract to deliver Train to Gain-funded training. Business Link can provide access to grants of up to £1,000 to owner managers and company directors. For more information, email info@businesslinksouth-east.co.uk.

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Here comes summer

SUNNY SMILES: Sandra Matthews-Marsh, chief executive of Visit Kent

By TONY PATEY
tony.patey@kosmedia.co.uk

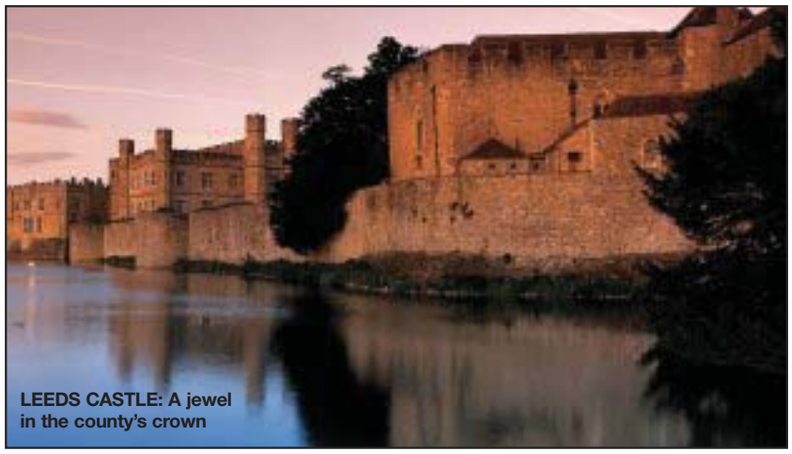
SUMMER might spell big business for Kent's Costa del Saxon Coast or the Isle of Thanet as millions of Brits who would have gone abroad are voting for 'staycations' and 'nanobreaks' for their holidays.

With the credit squeeze tightening budgets, regular stay-at-homers will be joined by one-in-five holidaymakers who went abroad last year. And with the weak pound offering great value to overseas tourists, that's good news for the county.

Tourism already accounts for £2.5 billion a year in Kent and employs more than 50,600 people, and every indication is that will boom even more this year with weather forecasters saying that we'll have a 'barbeque summer' with above-average temperatures.

"Every cloud has a silver lining and the current economic climate, the exchange rate and the Met Office predictions of a long, hot summer are bringing a welcome boost to our tourism, leisure and hospitality businesses," said Fran Warrington, head of Visit Kent at Kent County Council.

Although it is early in the season, the most recent research from Visit Kent reveals that self-catering accommodation is already reporting a significant upturn with a 19 per cent increase in overseas visitors in March compared with the same period last year.



LEEDS CASTLE: A jewel in the county's crown

And occupancy rates in the self-catering sector are up overall by nine percent on 2008.

In fact, the current strength of the euro is leading some near Continental visitors to book early not only for this summer, but also for holidays in 2010.

RAMSGATE: Thanet is expecting a boost

Meanwhile, three-fifths of the county's visitor attractions featured in the Visit Kent business barometer are confident that business will continue to improve over the next three months. Their confidence was boosted by a six per cent increase in visitor numbers in March compared with the same period last year, when figures also included the Easter break. General expectations are that the increase in the April figures, compared with 2008, will be even higher. Sandra Matthews-Marsh, chief executive, said: "All the indications are pointing in the right direction for a really good summer and we are working hard to position our county as a first-choice destination for all those UK residents deciding to holiday closer to home, either for their main break or for a second holiday.

"We have been working with our leading attractions to ensure they now meet and exceed the recognised high quality standards demanded by increasingly discerning visitors.

"And our continuing research has helped businesses develop new experiences and services to meet the expectations of a wide range of visitors, whatever they are seeking."

Kent entertains more than 45 million visitors every year and there are hopes this figure will rise even further this summer with cam-

Janet joins the crew at SeaFrance

NEW head of marketing at SeaFrance Dover-Calais Ferries is Janet Saville, pictured right.

In her new role she has already launched a range of initiatives which the company says are resulting in improved autumn sales.

In the past she has worked on high-profile brands including Sodastream, Birds Eye, Wall's and Duracell, before joining Sealink British Ferries.

Following a career break to raise a family, she joined Wightlink Isle of Wight Ferries as head of marketing, where she remained for 11 years.

and a tourism boom

paigns aimed at encouraging London residents and visitors to take the train and explore the county. The campaign will include special brochures at rail stations, a range of posters on Southeastern rail network and through the London Underground, as well as a dedicated website with details of two-for-one offers.

Visit Kent and local tourism businesses gathered at Leeds Castle recently to also plan this year's campaign aimed at attracting European visitors to Kent, with on-territory experts from Holland, Belgium and Germany. Plans for the new campaign will include attendance at European exhibitions, press and trade familiarisation visits, a new Dutch microsite and targeted e-newsletters.

Meantime, guest numbers at the Bell Hotel in Sandwich are up significantly on this time last year and so are future bookings.

"We were surprised, but I reckon it's all down to escapism," said co-owner Matt Collins.

"There's a lot of pessimism about and people want to get away from all that, even if it's just for a short break."

Bookings are up five per cent overall this year, with Easter takings up 45 per cent on 2008, the hotel's best Easter performance since it opened.

"March was brilliant, and April and May are looking even better," said Mr Collins, who opened the hotel with a business partner four years ago and spent £500,000 on refurbishment. They are now planning to convert a conference room into three extra bedrooms, to cope with the increased demand. Chislehurst Caves – another form of escapism with its 20 miles of tunnels hand-dug 8,000 years ago – is also enjoying boom times, with visitor numbers up 18 per cent on this time last year. Terry Hunt, manager of the caves, said: "It's probably because we're a value-for-money day out and particularly good for families."

Leeds Castle reports visitor numbers up 12 per cent on the expected total and an amazing 24,000 people went through the gates over the four days of the Easter weekend. Annual figures for 2008 show that there were 573,625 visitors, 63,550 more than expected. Shane Guy, from Leeds Castle, says much of the attraction's success in the past three years is down to the Key to the Castle ticket, where you pay once and visit all year round.

At Bluewater retailers reported that shoppers during its busy May Bank Holiday were looking ahead to the predicted hot summer, with sales of swimwear, sunglasses and summer fashion being particularly strong.

In addition, items for the garden, such as garden furniture, barbecues and accessories have also proved popular over the long weekend. Meanwhile, the county's support of coach operators and drivers has seen it recognised at the UK Coach Awards.

The awards, sponsored by Otford-based major insurance broker Belmont International, saw Medway Council named runner-up in the Most Coach Friendly Local Authority category; Hever Castle win runner-up in the Most Coach Friendly Tourist Attraction; and Chatham Historic Dockyard highly commended in the same category. Albatross Travel Group, the wholesale travel trade company based in Maidstone, and cross-Channel operators Eurotunnel and P&O Ferries were all highly commended in the Service Provider category. And Tourism South East received highly commended in the Effective Partnering category for its Coach Links for Excursions initiative.

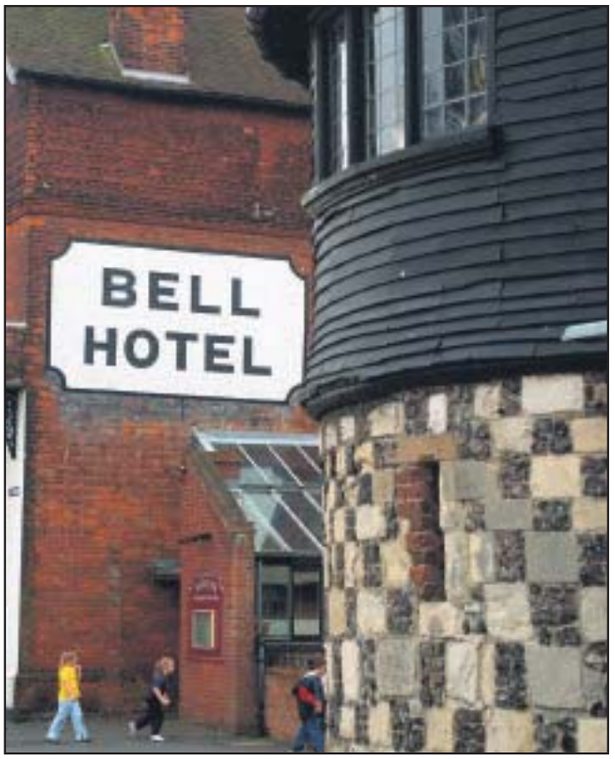
'Do not skimp on travel insurance'

PENNY-watching holidaymakers could land in trouble abroad if they skimp on their travel insurance.

That's the message from Hythe-based HolidayExtras.com, named Best Travel Insurance Provider in the Travel Weekly Golden Globe Awards 2009. Foreign Office research found that 65 per cent of Kent holidaymakers said they would be spending less on things like travel insurance because of the credit crunch.

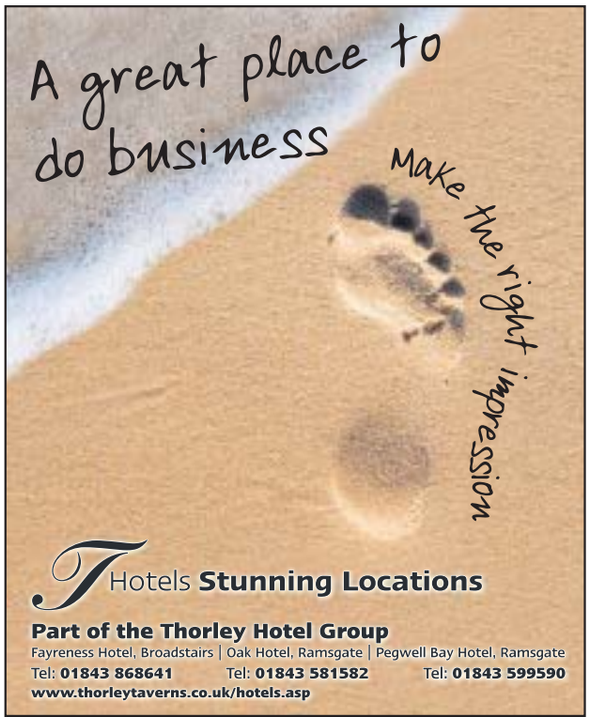
Andrea Clayton, head of insurance at HolidayExtras.com, says that good planning and a little homework can help ensure a trouble-free holiday.

"Many people think 'It won't happen to me', but travel insurance is the last thing you should cut corners on," she said. "The Foreign Office is clear that it won't always repatriate people who get stuck through a medical emergency."



ESCAPOLOGY: The Bell Hotel (above) at the Quayside (left) in Sandwich has reported an increase in bookings this year

'The prospect of a good summer and the weak pound is keeping Britons at home this year'



Timeline

Kent on Sunday sport takes a look back at the county's sporting action of yesteryear

1909

100 - TWO batsmen from the Pale Ale Brewery suffered head injuries while attempting to bat on a bombsite of a pitch at Penenden Heath in Maidstone, against North End.

The incidents sparked a heated debate about the dangers of fast bowling, particularly on the Heath, where as many as six games could take place at any one time, leading to chaos in the field and making it virtually impossible for the groundsmen to protect the wickets.

The blame for the injuries was placed firmly on the shoulders of cocksure fast bowlers, who saw medium and slow bowling as some kind of affront to their masculinity. "It therefore behoves bowlers of the express type to adopt slower methods on dangerous pitches," one correspondent wrote.

1959

50 - IT was a bad weekend to be a record holder at Brands Hatch, as a series of marks went tumbling.

Harold Greene set a 50cc lap record of 52.15mph on his 50 Sheene special and Bill Bodice beat his own time of 67.84mph as he rode to victory in the 10-lap sidecar scratch race, setting a new lap record of 68.04mph.

Alan Trow of Weling won all three 'solo' invitation races, but the meeting was overshadowed by a serious accident, when Gerald Turner of Welling crashed off on a 500 matchless, fracturing his skull.

Canterbury City made a double signing from their local rivals Snowdown, capturing the former Gillingham and Luton player Bill Burtenshaw and Jimmy Gallagher.

1984

25 - TOMMY Coulter tragically lost his fight with leukaemia at the age of 42. Coulter had managed Faversham, Shepway and Ramsgate, though the highlight of his career came when he steered Dover to a 4-1 victory over Colchester United at Crabble in an FA Cup first-round replay back in 1975/1976.

Keith Peacock signed a new three-year deal to stay on as manager of Gillingham, while Frank Worthington and Trevor Brooking both turned out for stalwart Gills' keeper Ron Hillyard's testimonial.

Kent batsman Mark Benson continued his convalescence from a knee injury – by watching the World Snooker Championships on television.

POT LUCK: Kent's Mark Benson watched snooker while recovering from injury

Brickies' reputation was built at the Bull Ground

Going over old ground

By FRED ATKINS

FOGHORN-VOICED Cher once sang of a desire to Turn Back Time and Sittingbourne supporters may similarly be wishing they could go back a couple of decades to avert their departure from their home of nearly a century.

North of the Avenue of Remembrance and west of Bell Road, The Bull Ground was Sittingbourne's HQ from 1892 to 1990 and it was here they grew into an established force in Kent football, despite enduring the cyclical financial crises that beset almost every local club.

The Brickies won Kent League titles, Kent Senior Cups and flirted with the Southern League, all at a ground that was integral to their success.

Local author Mike Floate wrote that it had: "enormous character and that indefinable atmosphere that no amount of money can design into a facilty."

Floate's case was proved by Central Park, where the club frittered away the £4.5 million they earned from selling The Bull in 1990.

The first, but not the most crippling flaw was the name. The new ground was only "central" to Sittingbourne in relation to Faversham, or Ulan Bator.

Casual supporters who were happy to walk to The Bull on a Saturday afternoon now had to trek for half an hour through an industrial estate to this gigantic folly of a stadium.

Picture: MIKE FLOATE

FORTRESS: The Bull Ground, where Sittingbourne found league and cup success

For a time this didn't appear to matter. With money to burn the Brickies recruited a host of players with Football League experience, including the ex-Liverpool midfielder Jimmy Case and romped to the Southern League Southern Division title in 1992/93.

But in common with many multi-purpose stadiums, it was almost impossible to create an atmosphere, especially when compared with The Bull.

Fans were a long way even from the dog track and Central Park had a knack of making 1,000 supporters look and sound like 100.

Maintenance costs alone were crippling and when the money from the sale of the Bull ran out, Sittingbourne tumbled into the red. Swale Council bought the stadium but by 1997 the club were defaulting on the rent.

Roger Cairns saved the day when he stepped in to take over the greyhound racing lease and to this day dogs still circle the Central Park track, but football hasn't been played there since Sittingbourne's tenants Maidstone took on Gillingham in a pre-season friendly in 2002.

Sittingbourne, after years of struggling to survive on crowds of about 200, decamped to what was then known as Pitch One, a training field next to the main ground at the start of the 2002/2003 season.

The Brickies have since stabilised at the renamed Bourne Park under chairman Andy Spice, though the permanent shadow of Central Park stands as a memory to the club's fleeting madness in the 1990s.

No such memorial exists at the site of The Bull, just the usual housing development and the standard car park, but the feeling persists that if someone offered to rebuild the old ground, Sittingbourne would go back there in a shot.

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Conway hurt in 220mph Indy smash

MIKE Conway described his 220mph horror crash during Indy 500 practice as the most frightening experience of his racing career, but remains confident he will qualify for the famous event, ***writes Tom Howard.***

The Sevenoaks racer, making his debut in one of motorsport's oldest and prestigious events, was rushed to hospital this week after his car speared into the concrete wall at 220mph during a practice session.

The 24-year-old was taken to a hospital in Indianapolis and kept in overnight as a precaution. Conway had his car to thank for absorbing the impact as he suffered bruised lungs and concussion.

The incident is the latest of run of bad luck the driver has experienced since moving across the Atlantic to compete in America's premier single-seater series. The former GP2 driver is yet to finish a race.

He told Kent on Sunday: "I am okay, but it was quite an impact. Looking back at the data, the team reckon the impact was 240 times the force of gravity. I felt pretty bad after it, but I am good to go now.

"There was no sign the car was going to let go, it was completely unexpected.

"I can remember it well, I turned into the corner at full speed, but the car snapped into a spin sending me backwards into the wall. It was pretty scary."

The accident left Conway unable to compete in the first two qualifying sessions, but he remains confident he will get the all clear from medical staff to compete in final qualifying tonight for the 93rd running of the Indy 500.

BIG IMPACT: Mike Conway spun out of a corner and ploughed backwards into a wall

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'I told Chloe they'd be cheering my name'

Picture: ADY KERRY

How jeers turned to cheers for Gills boss

By DAVID PRITCHARD

AFTER the Priestfield pitch had been cleared of delirious fans last Sunday, the squad came back out to milk the applause and celebrate reaching the play-off final.

It was a deserving tribute to a side that had just reached a Wembley final, but arguably the most important figure was absent.

After doing the obligatory television interview, manager Mark Stimson chose to spend the immediate aftermath with his 13-year-old daughter, Chloe.

"She's been here a couple of times when there's been a bit of abuse flying," he said. "It was nice to spend that moment with her because when it happened she was quite upset. I've tried to explain to her it's part of daddy's job and not to worry because one day they'll start singing my name."

Stimson has needed a thicker skin than his daughter since arriving at Priestfield to take charge of his first league job in November 2007.

His forthright style may have made a refreshing change to those in the press box, but it did not go down well with a section of supporters, branding him a non-league manager out of his depth who got the club relegated.

Stimson admits his first season was tough.

He said: "It was a challenge last year. I desperately wanted to keep the club in League One last year and I failed, which was very disappointing. I would say it was probably 95 per cent my fault."

A stuttering start to this season again prompted rumblings of discontent. Gradually his revamped squad, built with meagre resources, improved and still have the chance to bounce straight back to League One.

Few players know Stimson better than Adam Miller, who followed him to Priestfield from Stevenage last season. The midfielder has also taken flak from a minority of fans but believes it is time for Stimson to get the recognition he deserves.

He said: "Let's be honest, it's all down to him. We're all his signings bar about four or five of us, so it's him that has turned the club around. The players he's brought in are young, hungry and want to achieve things. That's all from him."

Alan Liptrott, co-editor of fans website GillsConnect.com, has been a critic of Stimson's in the past, but believes recent results have won a lot of people over.

He said: "Hopefully getting to Wembley will get most of his critics back onside. I think he's made great strides. Fans blamed him for the relegation but equally he should get the credit for this season."

Undoubtedly even victory next Saturday would still leave some unconvinced, but the majority would this time like the opportunity to applaud the manager, as well as the players.

Sport updated daily online
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Fleet chief in bid to keep hold of Daish

EBBSFLEET United chairman John Moules is quietly confident manager Liam Daish will agree a new deal at the club, despite being issued with a reduced playing budget.

Uncertainty surrounds the future of the Fleet boss with his contract at Stonebridge Road coming to an end this summer.

Daish, who has been in charge of Fleet for four years, admitted he would be keen to stay, but only if the club are "heading in the right direction."

After a number of meetings between Moules and Daish, the Fleet chairman believes the former Ireland international will sign a new deal, although it has to be ratified by the club's website owners first.

He said: "We had a meeting this week and I gave Liam the playing budget to look over. He will be talking to the players this week about their future. Let's just say when Liam received the budget news he didn't make any negative comments. It is looking promising that he will sign a new contract, but we all know how quickly things can change in 24 hours."

If Daish agrees to a new deal, he could be given a playing budget of £5,000 per week, 50 per cent down on last year.

KEEN: Liam Daish will stay at Ebbsfleet if the club moves in the right direction

Rush is on for the hottest ticket in town

GILLINGHAM fans have been queuing overnight to get their hands on tickets for the club's play-off final against Shrewsbury at Wembley.

More than 40,000 fans roared the club to victory against Wigan in their last Wembley appearance nine years ago and a blue army is again set to make the trip for the game on Saturday.

Gillingham received an allocation of 38,000 tickets for the big game from the Football League, almost twice the 21,000 initially given to their opponents. The first batch went on sale to season ticket holders on Friday, with hundreds queuing for hours to be among the first to get their hands on the sought-after tickets.

Huge numbers of supporters lined up yesterday when tickets went on general sale.

Alan Liptrott, co-editor of fansite GillsConnect.com, is a veteran of the club's two previous Wembley play-off finals and believes it will again capture the supporters' imagination.

He said: "The fans haven't had a lot to cheer about over the last few years. Coming down from the Championship all the way to League Two was a blow but getting to Wembley is a major step. I think it's going to galvanise the supporters in the hope there are better things to come."

BIG DAY OUT: Fans line up outside Priestfield box office to buy their play-off final tickets

While the fans have embraced the game it is clear Wembley still holds a special place in players' minds.

There are always many compelling stories going into big finals, but on the Gillingham side there is none more so than goalkeeper Simon Royce. The 37-year-old is nearing 400 appearances in a lengthy career but has only ever been to Wembley once as a spectator.

He said: "I've only ever been to Wembley when I was 11 years old to watch the Milk Cup final so for me it's a day out I'm going to really look forward to. I never thought it would come to be honest, it was quite emotional in the changing room after [Rochdale].

"To wait until I'm 37 is fantastic so I'm going to make the most of it."

Picture: IGOR KUPCO

NEXT STEP: Kent FA chief Keith Masters says county game needs a new division

Clubs urged to make decision on step six plan

NON-LEAGUE clubs across the county have been given a fortnight to express their interest in the introduction of a new division.

Kent is one of only two counties that doesn't have access to a league at step six of the football pyramid. Under the present situation there is a gap between the Kent County Premier League at step seven and the Kent League Premier Division at step five.

Representatives from a variety of clubs across the county met at Lordswood on Wednesday to discuss the plans.

They were given a questionnaire to fill out and return to the Kent County Football Association (KCFA) within the next two weeks to gauge the level of interest and how best to progress.

Keith Masters, chief executive at the KCFA, said: "Step six on the national league system is something that Kent desperately needs. It's not impossible to bridge the gap, but the number of clubs who have done it is not that great."

Leap

Few clubs are able to make the leap from the County League to the Kent League due to the more stringent ground requirements at the higher level. Step seven sides can only apply for ground improvement grants of £20,000 – nowhere near enough to do the work needed – but at step six the money available to clubs is five times higher.

Several issues remain, but Kent League chairman Denise Richmond is optimistic of ironing out the problems in time to introduce it in time for the 2010/11 season.

She said: "We'll all push for it to happen for then. The quicker we get it then the quicker clubs have access to funding."

Steffan bids a fond farewell to county

Somerset bowler tells of hopes for return to Kent

By GLENN PEARSON

STEFFAN Jones is pinning his hopes on a return to Kent when his contract ends with Somerset at the end of the season.

The big-hearted Welshman's loan spell finished at the end of the week and the 35-year-old has returned to Taunton in a bid to win his place back in Justin Langer's side.

The medium-fast bowler was so impressed with Rob Key's squad and his experience at St Lawrence, that he hopes a return to Canterbury will be on the cards next summer.

He told Kent on Sunday: "My contract is up at the end of the season and I would like the opportunity to go to Kent. If I stay at Somerset then that's great, but the only other county I would want to go to is Kent.

Fitness

"I have still got a good two years in me, I pride myself on my fitness and I would like the opportunity to bowl again for Kent.

"It's mixed emotions for me because obviously Somerset is home for me and they pay the bills, but I really enjoyed my time at Kent. Simon Willis is a good coach and Rob Key is one of the best captains I have played under.

"It's a lovely old family club and is just what I needed at this stage of the season, I think I needed to feel loved as sometimes you are taken for granted in cricket. It's nice to know someone thinks you can bowl."

Picture: IGOR KUPCO

FAMILY CLUB: Steffan Jones says he loves the family feel at Kent and says Rob Key is one of the best captains he has played under

The former Northamptonshire and Derbyshire seamer was drafted into the Kent squad at a time the club had injuries to frontline bowlers Amjad Khan, Robbie Joseph, Martin Saggers and Simon Cook, while Ryan McLaren was unavailable and an overseas bowler was yet to be announced.

Although he took only four wickets at 44 in three County Championship games, he led the attack well and deserved more wickets than he got. Coach Simon Willis said the Welshman's influence was felt both on and off the pitch and hasn't closed the door on Jones returning in the future.

"Steffan has been superb not only out on the field but in the dressing room, he has been fantastic," he said. "He loves playing the game and wants to be successful. He is contracted to Somerset until the end of this season, but what happens after that we will have to wait and see."

Having made his First-Class debut in 1997, Jones has experienced life in both Divisions of the County Championship and is confident Kent will bounce straight back after relegation last season, but did offer some advice.

"I think Kent will easily win the league in that division," he said.

"I hope they can get out of the rut of not getting batting bonus points though, because that cost them last year. It's okay when you are winning games, but it's the ones that you draw that you need to be picking up batting points in the first innings. Hopefully they can sort that out.

"The bowling line-up is very strong but I think the batting line-up is probably the best in both divisions, although Somerset are also pretty strong."

Sports news updated daily online
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DARK TIMES: Jota will not be racing in this year's 24-hour race

Jota's Le Mans 24-hour hopes go up in smoke

SPORTS car racing team Jota Sport are set to miss the Le Mans 24 hours this year due to the poor economic climate.

The Tunbridge Wells-based team, who have taken part in the world's oldest motor race for the last four years, decided not to enter this year, due to the poor exchange rate with Europe.

Jota Sport, who recorded an eighth place finish at the event, have not ruled a return to the famous French circuit in the near future.

The team, founded by Sam Hignett and Sam Hancock in 2000, are to focus on a possible entry to the Porsche Super Cup this season, a support championship for Formula One.

Hancock said: "Unfortunately we have not been able to go to Le Mans this year, but we are hoping to go back there in the future.

"Le Mans is something you have to plan long and hard for as it is such a special event."

This Sunday, Hancock and trainee driver Simon Dolan will take part in the second round of the SPEED Championship at Anglesey International Circuit.

Litespeed move for F3 ace Jay

DOUBTS regarding Jay Bridger's future in the British Formula 3 Championship are over after he signed a deal with the Litespeed team.

The Horsmonden driver has had a turbulent season and was facing an uphill struggle to scrape enough funds together to complete the British Formula 3 season.

Bridger, who won the British Formula 3 National Class last year, started the season with Team West-Tec, but ended his association with the team after just one race last month. After the split, the 20-year-old was hoping to form his own team in a bid to continue his involvement in the series.

However, this week talks with Formula 3 team Litespeed proved fruitful and Bridger has agreed a deal which will see them run his car for the remainder of the series.

He told Kent on Sunday: "It is a fantastic deal for myself and the team. We will now get some help in running the car this season and a financial boost, which should see us finish the year."

Bridger will make his debut in the Litespeed/Bridger Motorsport car at Northamptonshire's Rockingham circuit on May 31.

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SPELL OF AN EFFORT: Tredders (in front) leads the team back to the pavilion after taking 8 for 66 against Glamorgan Picture: ADY KERRY

'It all came together'

Pre-season graft pays off for Kent off-spinner as he posts career-best figures in Championship and FPT

IT is always hugely satisfying in sport when a lot of hard work pays off on the field, and that is exactly how I feel after the opening month of the season.

Taking career-best figures of 8 for 66 against Glamorgan, to win us that County Championship game, and also a one-day best of 6 for 27 when we defeated Middlesex at Southgate in the Friends Provident Trophy, is actually only the start of why I am so pleased with how things have gone.

I said at the end of last season that, after enduring a summer in which I felt I had not done justice to myself – with ball or bat – I would go away and work as hard as I could at my game over the winter months, and then aim to come back strongly in April and May.

The fact I didn't get England Lions recognition either last winter, 12 months after I had been selected to join the senior England one-day squad on tour in New Zealand, put my situation into even starker relief.

Part of my winter work was a trip to Bangalore in India to work with some spin coaches and other spinners who were there, and I have reported in this column before how valuable I have found the advice Min Patel has been giving me.

That work with Min has continued through pre-season and into the season itself, and I am also in touch with him on the phone when I need to chat about any specifics. As all Kent fans know, Min was a canny performer and a fine cricketer and it is great for me to be able to call on his knowledge and know-how.

But you still have to go out there and perform yourself, and I am delighted that the couple of little things that I have changed in my action – after working with Min – are going well and that I've also put into practice a slight difference in my approach to bowling in Championship cricket.

During my time as a in First-Class cricketer I've always been an aggressive bowler and I try to bowl an attacking line in an effort to take wickets.

But, as Min has said, there are times when that isn't the right way to go and that is when you do need to think about your economy rate first and put pressure back on the batsmen.

It is only a subtle difference, and my wicket-taking so far this season shows I have still been getting people out, but it is a mental shift which has helped me already.

Seventeen wickets at an average of 17.23 in our first three Championship matches is a very pleasing return, with the highlight of course the eight-for against Glamorgan, especially as at one stage on that last day the draw was the favourite result.

But I have also been pleased to score 165 runs in those same games and to have made two half-centuries at important times.

All in all, too, it has been an excellent start to the summer for us – especially when you think we have not yet been at full strength. Ryan McLaren is still to come, when he returns from the IPL, and Amjad Khan should be fit again to do some bowling by the end of May.

Our two Championship wins against Essex and Glamorgan were both magnificent efforts and have put us in the top two – which is right where we wanted to be early on as promotion back to Division One is the primary goal for everyone this year.

But, hopefully, we can also qualify for the quarter-finals of the FPT after winning three of our first four games, and soon we will have the Twenty20 Cup to look forward to again.

Finally, a word about Wayne Parnell, our new 19-year old quick bowler from South Africa. He has fitted into the dressing room superbly well, and has impressed all of us with his maturity as a cricketer – with bat as well as ball.

He is obviously an extremely talented lad, and although his current spell with us finishes this week, I hope we see him back at Kent again in the very near future.

At Chelmsford, during our back-from-the-dead Championship win, he bowled as fast as I've seen anyone in county cricket – including Mohammad Sami, who was at times rapid to say the least when he played for Kent a few years ago.

• ***James Tredwell, the Kent off spinning all-rounder, is one of Kent on Sunday's regular sports columnists.***

Test match cricket still number one

FRED ATKINS recalls the enviable task of covering the first Test between England and the West Indies at Lord's

IT WAS during an educational/occupational hinterland around a decade ago that I last got the chance to watch all five days of a cricket match.

The difference between university and unemployment is nuanced but the hours offer an excellent grounding in the art of Test match cricket, one that can only be bettered by joining the England coaching staff (last count 437 members and rising) or becoming a member of the cricketing press.

If you are lucky enough to join the fourth estate, the first law is not be overawed by the presence of people who are there because they actually know what they are talking about.

Stationed in the Lord's media centre for the first Test between England and West Indies, at one point I found myself between David 'Bumble' Lloyd and Nasser Hussein.

PATIENCE PERSONIFIED: Sir Geoffrey Boycott

A day-glo Mark Nicholas swept around the corridors, Sir Geoffrey Boycott stood waiting patiently (how else?) for coffee and I shared a lift with Alec 'Bowling Croftie' Stewart.

With a top score last season of 11 not out for West Peckham, in company like this it's advisable to keep your mouth shut. Don't, however, assume that everyone present knows what they're talking about.

It would be easy to get used to this kind of life. From a financial point of view the benefits are obvious.

Over five days you can save £600 in match tickets by getting accredited and a far greater sum by enjoying the free food and drink, taking into account Lord's prices and the apparent 'idiot tax' levied on members of the public who have the temerity to get either hungry or thirsty.

So if someone asks you to cover a test match, say "yes", immediately.

It's a cushy job, but someone's got to do it.

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FOOTBALL
How Mark Stimson shut up Gills' boo boys **93**

CRICKET
Kent's James Tredwell on his excellent start to the season **95**

'Win or lose it will be a great day out'

GILLINGHAM fans flocked to Priestfield in their thousands yesterday to get their hands on tickets for the play-off final at Wembley.

The Gills booked their place in the League Two showpiece with a 2-1 win against Rochdale at Priestfield last Sunday, and are expected to take up their allocated 38,000 for the final on Saturday.

Gillingham fans arrived at the ground in their droves on Friday morning as the hottest ticket in town went on sale to season ticket holders.

Marcus Sutton (pictured, with Gary Jackson) arrived at 2am, eight hours before the club opened for business.

He said: "Win or lose it will be a great day out for everyone involved with the club. If we don't get promoted we'll be back next year."

Alan Liptrott, co-editor of fans website Gills Connect, said: "Whatever the result fans don't forget days out like this and it's important to savour because you never know how long it will be before we're back there again.

"We should be making it a big PR exercise for the club: a lot of people after Wembley last time adopted the club and if we can get a few thousand on board again it would help."

Huge numbers of supporters lined up yesterday when tickets went on general sale.

• ***See page 93 for more news on Gillingham's quest to return to League One through the play-off final at Wembley.***

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FORD EXILE OVER AT LAST FOR KENT

South African coach allowed into UK after visa delay

EXCLUSIVE

By **GLENN PEARSON**

KENT'S director of cricket Graham Ford has told how he thought he would be denied joining up with the county for the entire summer.

The South African coach has been exiled in his native country for eight weeks, forcing him to miss the club's start to the season after stringent visa regulations denied his entrance to the country.

But now the 48-year-old has finally been granted a visa and joins up with the Kent side today as they travel to Edinburgh to play the Scottish Saltires in the Friends Provident Trophy.

Speaking from South Africa, Ford told Kent on Sunday: "It's finally happened, I honestly thought it was never going to happen at one point. It has not been ideal watching from a distance, it's been pretty frustrating.

"I guess I'm just excited that it's going to happen and it's a case of getting down to business as quickly as possible. I am keen to get going, see the boys, and watch them play."

The former South Africa coach flies in at Heathrow this morning where he will then be transported to Gatwick to meet up with the Kent squad and the coaching staff, before boarding a plane to Edinburgh.

His arrival will be a welcome relief to the club's coaching staff, led by Simon Willis, who have done a good job preparing the players for games in Ford's absence.

Willis in particular has worked well with skipper Rob Key and his stand-in, Martin van Jaarsveld, to help Kent to second in the County Championship.

Ford said knowing Willis was in charge ensured his exile was easier to take.

"I have always had confidence in Simon and again he has done a fantastic job," he said. "The players deserve a pat on the back as they too have taken on responsibility for their own games. The one thing that has made it easier is knowing we have fantastic leadership at the club with Rob Key, Simon and vice-captain Martin van Jaarsveld, and having that quality in place helps."

Ford has also played an active part in discussions as to whether the club bring Wayne Parnell back as the county's overseas player after the World Twenty20 or bring in an international batsman while Key is also away with England playing in the same competition.

The club's cricket committee will meet again next week to discuss the situation as Parnell's contract ends after Wednesday's trip to play Warwickshire at Edgbaston.

Ford also said the committee will be making a decision about the future of bowling coach Geoff Arnold, who joined the club on a consultancy basis from Surrey in pre-season.

For now, Ford is hopeful he will not have to go through the same situation with his visa application next season.

He said: "I imagine I will not have to take the English literacy test again, so hopefully next year everything will be in place."

Picture: ADY KERRY

RELIEVED: Graham Ford will join up with the Kent squad today after a delay over his visa

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